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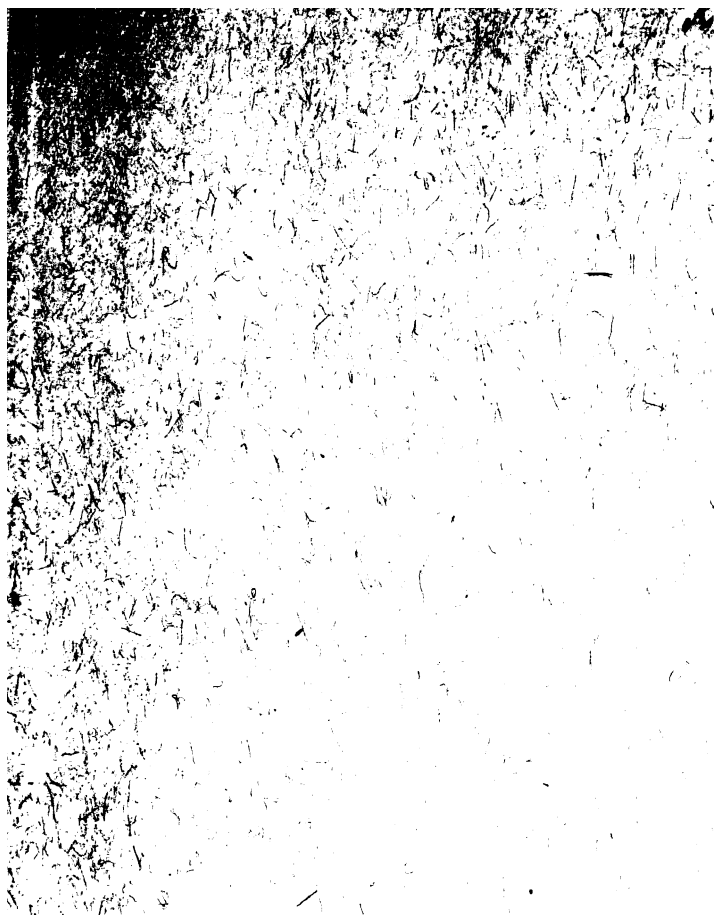
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T H E

DRAMATICK WORKS

O F

GEORGE COLMAN.

V O L. III.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES

THE SECOND

BY

JOHN

WELLES

ESQ.

THE
DRAMATICK WORKS
OF
GEORGE COLMAN.

VOLUME THE THIRD;

CONTAINING ALTERATIONS OF

PHILASTER,
KING LEAR,

EPICŒNE; Or,
The SILENT WOMAN.

L O N D O N,
Printed for T. BECKET, Adelphi, Strand.

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PHILASTER.

TRAGEDY.

WRITTEN BY

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

WITH ALTERATIONS.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, on
the 8th of October, 1763.*

VOL. III.

B

ADVER-

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE present age, though it has done honour to its own discernment by the applauses paid to Shakespeare, has, at the same time, too grossly neglected the other great masters in the same school of writing. The pieces of Beaumont and Fletcher in particular, (to say nothing of Jonson, Massinger, Shirley, &c.) abound with beauties, so much of the same colour with those of Shakespeare, that it is almost unaccountable, that the very age which admires one, even to idolatry, should pay so little attention to the others; and, while almost every poet or critick, at all eminent in the literary world, has been ambitious of appearing as an editor of Shakespeare, no more than two solitary editions of Beaumont and Fletcher, and one of those of a very late date, have been published in the present century.

The truth is, that Nature indeed is in all ages the same; but modes and customs, manners and languages, are subject to perpetual variation. Time insensibly renders writings obsolete and uncouth, and the gradual introduction of new words

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

and idioms brings the older forms into disrepute and disuse. But the intrinsic merit of any work, though it may be obscured, must for ever remain as antique coins, or old plate, though not current or fashionable, still have their value, according to their weight.

The injuries of modern innovation in the state of letters may be in a great measure repaired, by rendering the writings of our old authors familiar to the publick, and bringing them often before them. How many plays are there of Shakespear, now in constant acting, of which the directors of the theatres would scarce hazard the representation, if the long-continued, and, as it were, traditional approbation of the publick had not given a sanction to their irregularities, and familiarised the diction! The language even of our Liturgy and Bible, if we may venture to mention them on this occasion, would perhaps soon become obsolete and unintelligible to the generality, if they were not constantly read in our churches. The stile of our authors, especially in this play, is often remarkably plain and simple, and only raised or enriched by the sentiments. It is the opinion of Dryden, that even " Shakespear's language is a little obsolete in comparison of theirs; and that the
" English

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“ English language in them arrived to its highest
“ perfection; what words have since been taken
“ in, being rather superfluous, than necessary.”

Philaster has always been esteemed one of the best productions of Beaumont and Fletcher; and, we are told by Dryden, was the first play that brought them into great reputation. The beauties of it are indeed so striking and so various, that our authors might in this play almost be said to rival Shakespeare, were it not for the many evident marks of imitation of his manner. The late editors of Beaumont and Fletcher conceive, that the poets meant to delineate, in the character of Philaster, a Hamlet racked with the jealousy of Othello; and there are several passages, in this play, where the authors have manifestly taken fire from similar circumstances and expressions in Shakespeare, particularly some, that will readily occur to the reader as he goes along, from Othello, Hamlet, Cymbeline, and Lear.

To remove the objections to the performance of this excellent play on the modern stage, has been the chief labour, and sole ambition, of the present editor. It may be remembered, that the Spanish Curate, the Little French Lawyer, and Scornful Lady of our authors, as well as the Silent Woman

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of Jonson, all favourite entertainments of our predecessors, have, within these few years, encountered the severity of the pit, and received sentence of condemnation. That the uncommon merit of such a play as *Philaster* might be universally acknowledged and received, it appeared necessary to clear it of ribaldry and obscenity, and to amend a gross indecency in the original constitution of the fable, which must have checked the success due to the rest of the piece, nay, indeed, was an insuperable obstacle to its representation.

But though the inaccuracies and licentiousness of the piece were inducements (according to the *incudi reddere* of Horace) to put it on the anvil again, yet nothing has been added more than was absolutely necessary, to make it move easily on the new hinge, whereon it now turns: Nor has any thing been omitted, except what was supposed to have been likely to obscure its merit, or injure its success. The pen was drawn, without the least hesitation, over every scene now expunged, except the first scene of the third act, as it stands in the original; in regard to which, the part, that *Philaster* sustains in it, occasioned some pause: But, on examination, it seemed that *Dion's* falsification of facts in that scene was inconsistent with the rest
of

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

of his character, though very natural in such a person as Megra: And though we have in our times seen the sudden and instantaneous transitions from one passion to another remarkably well represented on the stage, yet Philaster's emotions appeared impossible to be exhibited with any conformity to truth or nature. It was therefore thought advisable to omit the whole scene: and it is hoped, that this omission will not be disapproved; and that it will not appear to have left any void or chasm in the action; since the imputed falshood of Arethusa, after being so industriously made publick to the whole court, might very naturally be imagined to come to the knowledge of Philaster, in a much shorter interval than is often supposed to elapse between the acts, or even between the scenes of some of our old plays.

The scenes in the fourth act, wherein Philaster, according to the original play, wounds Arcthusa and Bellario, and from which the piece took its second title of Love Lies A-bleeding, have always been censured by the criticks. They breathe too much of that spirit of blood, and cruelty, and horror, of which the English Tragedy hath often been accused. The hero's wounding his mistress hurt the delicacy of most; and his maiming Bellario

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sleeping, in order to save himself from his pursuers, offended the generosity of all. This part of the fable, therefore, so injurious to the character of Philaster, it was judged absolutely requisite to alter; and a new turn has been given to all those circumstances: But the change has been effected by such simple means, and with so much reverence to the original, that there are hardly ten lines added on account of the alteration.

The rest of the additions or alterations may be seen at once by comparing the present play with the original; if the reader does not, on such occasions, of himself too easily discover the patchwork of a modern hand.

There is extant in the works of the duke of Buckingham, who wrote the Rehearsal, and altered the Chances, an alteration of this play, under the title of the Restoration, or Right will take Place. The duke seems to have been very studious to disguise the piece, the names of the *dramatis personæ*, as well as the title, being entirely changed; and the whole piece, together with the prologue and epilogue, seeming intended to carry the air of an oblique political satire on his own times. However that may be, the duke's play is as little (if not less) calculated for the present stage, as the original

nal

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nal of our authors. The character of Thrasomond (for so the duke calls the Spanish Prince) is much more ludicrous than the Pharamond of Beaumont and Fletcher. Few of the indecencies or obscenities in the original are removed; and with what delicacy the adventure of Megra is managed, may be determined from the following specimen of his grace's alteration of that circumstance, scarce a word of the following extract being to be found in Beaumont and Fletcher.

Enter the guard, bringing in Thrasomond, in drawers, muffled up in a cloak.

Guard. Sir, in obedience to your commands, We stopt this fellow stealing out of doors.

They pull off his cloak.

Agremont. Who's this? the prince!

Cleon. Yes; he is incognito.

King. Sir; I must chide you for this looseness: You've wrong'd a worthy lady; but no more.

Thras. Sir, I came hither but to take the air.

Cleon. A witty rogue, I warrant him.

Agremont. Ay, he's a devil at his answers.

King. Conduct him to his lodgings.

If to move the passions of pity and terror are the two chief ends of Tragedy, there needs no apology for

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for giving that title to the play of Philaster. If Lear, Hamlet, Othello, &c. &c. notwithstanding the casual introduction of comick circumstances in the natural course of the action, are tragedies; Philaster is so too. The duke of Buckingham entitles his alteration a Tragi-comedy; but that word, according to its present acceptation, conveys the idea of a very different species of composition; a play like the Spanish Friar, or Oroonoko, in which two distinct actions, one serious and the other comick, are unnaturally woven together; as absurd a medley (in the opinion of Addison) as if an epick writer was to undertake to throw into one poem the adventures of Æneas and Hudibras.

As to the form in which the piece is now submitted to the publick, some, perhaps, will think that the editor has taken too many liberties with the original, and many may censure him for not having made a more thorough alteration. There are, it must be confessed, many things still left in the play, which may be thought to lower the dignity of Tragedy, and which would not be admitted in a fable of modern construction: But where such things were in nature, and inoffensive, and served at the sametime as so many links in the chain of circumstances that compose the action, it was thought better to subdue in some measure the intemperance
of

ADVERTISEMENT.

of the scenes of low humour, than wholly to reject or omit them. It would not have been in the power, nor indeed was it ever in the intention or desire, of the editor, to give Philaster the air of a modern performance; no more than an architect of this age would endeavour to embellish the magnificence of a Gothic building with the ornaments of the Greek or Roman orders. It is impossible for the severest reader to have a meaner opinion of the editor's share in the work than he entertains of it himself. Something, however, was necessary to be done; and the reasons for what he has done have already been assigned; nor can he repent of the trouble he has taken, at the instance of a friend, whom he is happy to oblige, when he sees himself the instrument of restoring Philaster to the theatre, of displaying new graces in Mrs. Yates, and of calling forth the extraordinary powers of so promising a genius for the stage as Mr. Powell.

PRO-

P R O L O G U E,

Spoken by Mr. KING.

WHILE modern Tragedy, by rule exact,
Spins out a thin-wrought fable, act by act,
We dare to bring you one of those bold plays
Wrote by rough English wits in former days;
Beaumont and Fletcher! those twin stars, that run
Their glorious course round Shakespeare's golden
sun;

Or when Philaster Hamlet's place supplied,
Or Bessus walk'd the stage by Falstaff's side.
Their souls, well pair'd, shot fire in mingled rays,
Their hands together twin'd the social bays,
'Till fashion drove, in a refining age,
Virtue from court, and Nature from the stage.
Then nonsense, in heroicks, seem'd sublime;
Kings rav'd in couplets, and maids sigh'd in rhyme.
Next, prim, and trim, and delicate, and chaste,
A haish from Greece and France, came Modern Taste.
Cold are her sons, and so afraid of dealing
In rant and fustian, they ne'er rise to feeling.

Oh,

P R O L O G U E.

Oh, say, ye bards of phlegm, say, where's the name
That can with Fletcher urge a rival claim?
Say, where's the poet, train'd in pedant schools,
Equal to Shakespeare, who o'erleap'd all rules?

Thus of our bards we boldly speak our mind;
A harder task, alas, remains behind:
To-night, as yet by publick eyes unseen,
A raw, unpractis'd novice fills the scene.
Bred in the city, his theatrick star
Brings him at length on this side Temple-Bar;
Smit with the muse, the ledger he forgot,
And when he wrote his name, he made a blot.
Him while perplexing hopes and fears embarrass,
Skulking (like Hamlet's rat) *behind the arras,*
Me a dramattick fellow-feeling draws,
Without a fee, to plead a brother's cause.
Genius is rare; and while our great comptroller,
No more a manager, turns *arrant stroller,*
Let new adventurers your care engage,
And nurse the infant saplings of the stage!

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING,	<i>Mr. Bransby.</i>
PHILASTER,	<i>Mr. Powell.</i>
PHARAMOND,	<i>Mr. Lee.</i>
DION,	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>
CLEREMONT,	<i>Mr. Castle.</i>
THRASILINE,	<i>Mr. Ackman.</i>
Captain,	<i>Mr. Baddeloy.</i>
Countryman,	<i>Mr. Parsons.</i>
Messengers,	{ <i>Mr. Fox.</i>
	{ <i>Mr. Marr.</i>
Woodmen,	{ <i>Mr. Watkins.</i>
	{ <i>Mr. Strange.</i>
ARETHUSA,	<i>Miss Bride.</i>
EUPHRASIA, (disguised under the name of BELLARIO)	} <i>Mrs. Yates.</i>
MEGRA, (a Spanish lady)	<i>Mrs. Lee.</i>
GALATEA,	<i>Miss Mills.</i>
Lady,	<i>Mrs. Hippisley.</i>

SCENE, SICILY.

P H I L A S T E R,

A C T I.

SCENE, an antichamber in the palace.

Enter Dion, Cleremont, and Thrasiline.

Cleremont.

HERE's nor lords nor ladies.

Dion. Credit me, gentlemen, I wonder at it. They receiv'd strict charge from the king to attend here: Besides, it was boldly publish'd, that no officer should forbid any gentlemen that desired to attend and hear.

Clere. Can you guess the cause?

Dion. Sir, it is plain, about the Spanish prince, that's come to marry our kingdom's heir, and be our sovereign.

Clere. Many, that will seem to know much, say, she looks not on him like a maid in love.

Thra. They say too, moreover, that the lady
Megra

Megra (sent hither by the queen of Spain, Pharamond's mother, to grace the train of Arethusa, and attend her to her new home, when espoused to the prince) carries herself somewhat too familiarly towards Pharamond; and it is whisper'd, that there is too close an intercourse between him and that lady.

Dion. Troth, perhaps, there may; tho' the multitude (that seldom know any thing but their own opinions) speak what they would have. But the prince, before his own approach, receiv'd so many confident messages from the state, and bound himself by such indissoluble engagements, that I think their nuptials must go forwards, and that the princess is resolv'd to be ruled.

Clere. Sir, is it thought, with her he shall enjoy both these kingdoms of Sicily and Calabria?

Dion. Sir, it is, without controversy, so meant. But 'twill be a troublesome labour for him to enjoy both these kingdoms with safety, the right heir to one of them living, and living so virtuously; especially, the people admiring the bravery of his mind, and lamenting his injuries.

Clere. Who? Philaster?

Dion. Yes; whose father, we all know, was by our late king of Calabria unrighteously depos'd from his

his fruitful Sicily. Myself drew some blood in those wars, which I would give my hand to be wash'd from.

Clere. Sir, my ignbrance in state-policy will not let me know, why, Philaster being heir to one of these kingdoms, the king should suffer him to walk abroad with such free liberty.

Dion. Sir, it seems, your nature is more constant than to enquire after state-news. But the king, of late, made a hazard of both the kingdoms of Sicily and his own, with offering but to imprison Philaster. At which the city was in arms, not to be charm'd down by any state-order or proclamation, till they saw Philaster ride through the streets pleas'd, and without a guard; at which they threw their hats, and their arms, from them; some to make bonfires, some to drink, all for his deliverance: Which, wise men say, is the cause the king labours to bring in the power of a foreign nation to awe his own with. [Flourish.

Thra. Peace, the king.

Scene draws, and discovers the King, Pharamond, Arthusa, and train.

King. To give a stronger testimony of love
Than sickly promises (which commonly

In princes find both birth and burial
 In one breath) we have drawn you, worthy Sir,
 To make your fair endearments to our daughter,
 And worthy services known to our subjects,
 Now lov'd and wonder'd at: next, our intent
 To plant you deeply, our immediate heir,
 Both to our blood and kingdoms. For this lady,
 (The best part of your life, as you confirm me,
 And I believe) though her few years and sex
 Yet teach her nothing but her fears and blushes;
 Think not, dear Sir, these undivided parts,
 That must mould up a virgin, are put on
 To shew her so, as borrow'd ornaments;
 To speak her perfect love to you, or add
 An artificial shadow to her nature.
 Last, noble son, (for so I now must call you)
 What I have done thus publick, is not only
 To add a comfort in particular
 To you or me, but all; and to confirm
 The nobles, and the gentry of these kingdoms,
 By oath to your succession, which shall be
 Within this month at most.

Pha. Kissing your white hand, mistress, I take
 leave

To thank your royal father; and thus far,
 To be my own free trumpet. Understand,

Great

Great king, and these your subjects ! Gentlemen,
 Believe me in a word, a prince's word,
 There shall be nothing to make up a kingdom
 Mighty, and flourishing, defenced, fear'd,
 Equal to be commanded and obey'd,
 But through the travels of my life I'll find it,
 And tie it to this country. And I vow,
 My reign shall be so easy to the subject,
 That ev'ry man shall be his prince himself,
 And his own law (yet I his prince and law).
 And, dearest lady, let me say, you are
 The blessed'st living ; for, sweet princess, you
 Shall make him your's, for whom great queens
 must die.

Thra. Miraculous !

Cler. This speech calls him Spaniard, being
 nothing but

A large inventory of his own commendations.
 But here comes one more worthy those large
 speeches,
 Than the large speaker of them.

Enter Philaster.

Phi. Right noble Sir, as low as my obedience,
 And with a heart as loyal as my knee,
 I beg your favour.

C 2

King.

King. Rife; you have it, Sir.
 Speak your intents, Sir.

Phi. Shall I speak 'em freely?—
 Be still my royal sovereign.

King. As a subject,
 We give you freedom.

Dion. Now it heats.

Phi. Then thus I turn
 My language to you, prince; you, foreign man!
 Ne'er stare, nor put on wonder, for you must
 Endure me, and you shall. This earth you tread on
 (A dowry, as you hope, with this fair princess)
 By my dead father (oh! I had a father,
 Whose memory I bow to) was not left
 To your inheritance, and I up and living;
 Having myself about me and my sword,
 The souls of all my name, and memories,
 These arms and some few friends, besides the gods,
 To part so calmly with it, and sit still,
 And say, 'I might have been.' I tell thee, Pharamond,

When thou art king, look I be dead and rotten,
 And my name ashes: For, hear me, Pharamond,
 This very ground thou goest on, this fat earth,
 My father's friends made fertile with their faiths,
 Before that day of shame, shall gape and swallow
 Thee

Thee and thy nation, like a hungry grave,
 Into her hidden bowels. Prince it shall ;
 By Nemesis, it shall !

King. You do displease us :
 You are too bold.

Phi. No, Sir, I am too tame,
 Too much a turtle, a thing born without passion,
 A faint shadow, that every drunken cloud sails over,
 And maketh nothing.

Pba. What you have seen in me to stir offence,
 I cannot find ; unless it be this lady,
 Offer'd into mine arms, with the succession,
 Which I must keep, though it hath pleas'd your
 fury

To mutiny within you. The king grants it,
 And I dare make it mine. You have your answer.

Phi. If thou wert sole inheritor to him
 That made the world his, and were Pharamond
 As truly valiant, as I feel him cold,
 And ring'd among the choicest of his friends,
 And from this presence, spite of all these stops,
 You should hear further from me.

King. Sir, you wrong the prince :
 I gave you not this freedom to brave our best friends.
 You do deserve our frown : Go to, be better temper'd.

Phi. It must be, Sir, when I am nobler us'd.

King. Philafter, tell me

The injuries you aim at in your riddles.

Phi. If you had my eyes, Sir, and sufferance,
My griefs upon you, and my broken fortunes,
My wants great, and now nought but hopes and
fears,

My wrongs would make ill riddles to be laugh'd at,
Dare you be still my king, and right me not?

King. Go to:

Be more yourself, as you respect our favour;
You'll stir us else: Sir, I must have you know
That you're, and shall be, at our pleasure, what
fashion we

Will put upon you: Smooth your brow, or by the
Gods——

Phi. I am dead, Sir, you're my fate: It was not I
Said I was wrong'd: I carry all about me
My weak stars led me to, all my weak fortunes.
Who dares in all this presence speak, (that is
But man of flesh, and may be mortal) tell me,
I do not most entirely love this prince,
And honour his full virtues!

King. Sure he's possess.

Phi. Yes, with my father's spirit: It's here, oh,
king!

A dangerous spirit; now he tells me, king,

I was

I was a king's heir; bids me be a king;
 And whispers to me, these be all my subjects.
 'Tis strange he will not let me sleep, but dives
 Into my fancy, and there gives me shapes
 That kneel, and do me service, cry me king:
 But I'll suppress him, he's a factious spirit,
 And will undo me: Noble Sir, your hand,
 I am your servant.

King. Away, I do not like this:
 For this time I do pardon your wild speech.

[*Exeunt King, Pha. Are. and train.*]

Dion. See, how his fancy labours: Has he not
 Spoke home and bravely? What a dangerous train
 Did he give fire to! how he shook the king!
 Made his soul melt within him, and his blood
 Run into whey! it stood upon his brow
 Like a cold winter dew.

Phi. Gentlemen,
 You have no suit to me? I am no minion:
 You stand, methinks, like men that would be
 courtiers,

If you could well be flatter'd at a price,
 Not to undo your children: You're all honest:
 Go, get you home again, and make your country
 A virtuous court, to which your great ones may,
 In their diseas'd age, retire, and live recluse.

Clera. How do you, worthy Sir?

Phi. Well, very well,
And so well, that, if the king please, I find,
I may live many years.

Dion. The king must please,
Whilst we know what you are, and who you are,
Your wrongs and injuries: Shrink not, worthy Sir,
But add your father to you: In whose name
We'll waken all the Gods, and conjure up
The rods of vengeance, the abused people;
Who, like to raging torrents, shall swell high,
And so begirt the dens of these male-dragons,
That, through the strongest safety, they shall beg
For mercy at your sword's point.

Phi. Friends, no more;
Our ears may be corrupted: 'Tis an age
We dare not trust our wills to: Do you love me?

Thra. Do we love Heav'n and honour?

Phi. My lord Dion,
You had a virtuous gentlewoman call'd you father:
Is she yet alive?

Dion. Most honour'd Sir, she is:
And, for the penance but of an idle dream,
Has undertook a tedious pilgrimage.

Enter

Enter a Lady.

Phi. Is it to me, or any of these gentlemen, you come?

Lady. To you, brave lord; the princess would entreat

Your present company,

Phi. Kifs her fair hand, and say, I will attend her.

Dion. Do you know what you do?

Phi. Yes, go to see a woman.

Clere. But do you weigh the danger you are in?

Phi. Danger in a sweet face?

Her eye may shoot me dead, or those true red
And white friends in her face may steal my soul out:
There's all the danger in't: But be what may,
Her single name hath armed me. [Exit.

Dion. Go on:

And be as truly happy as thou art fearless:
Come, gentlemen, let's make our friends acquainted,
Lest the king prove false. [Exeunt.

Scene changes to another apartment.

Enter Arethusa and a Lady.

Are. Comes he not?

Lady. Madam?

Are. Will Philaster come?

Lady. Dear madam, you were wont

To

To credit me at first.

Are. But didst thou tell me so?

I am forgetful, and my woman's strength
Is so o'ercharg'd with danger like to grow
About my marriage, that these under things
Dare not abide in such a troubled sea;
How look'd he, when he told thee he would come?

Lady. Why, well.

Are. And not a little fearful?

Lady. Fear, madam? Sure he knows not what it is.

Are. You all are of his faction, the whole court
Is bold in praise of him; whilst I
May live neglected, and do noble things,
As fools in strife throw gold into the sea,
Drown'd in the doing: But, I know, he fears.

Lady. Fear? madam, methought, his looks hid
more

Of love than fear.

Are. Of love? to whom? to you?

Did you deliver those plain words I sent
With such a winning gesture, and quick look,
That you have caught him?

Lady. Madam, I mean to you.

Are. Of love to me? Alas! thy ignorance
Lets thee not see the crosses of our births.
Nature, that loves not to be question'd why

She

She did or this, or that, but has her ends,
 And knows she does well, never gave the world
 Two things so opposite, so contrary,
 As he, and I am.

Lady. Madam, I think I hear him.

Are. Bring him in: [*Exit Lady.*]

You Gods, that would not have your dooms with-
 stood,

Whose holy wisdoms at this time it is,
 To make the passion of a feeble maid
 The way unto your justice, I obey.

Re-enter Lady and Philaster.

Lady. Here is my lord Philaster.

Are. Oh! 'tis well:

Withdraw yourself.

[*Exit Lady.*]

Phi. Madam, your messenger

Made me believe, you wish'd to speak with me.

Are. 'Tis true, Philaster. Have you ever
 known,

That I have ought detracted from your worth?

Have I in person wrong'd you? or have set

My baser instruments to throw disgrace

Upon your virtues?

Phi. Never, madam, you.

Are. Why then should you, in such a publick place,
Injure

Injure a princefs, and a scandal lay
 Upon my fortunes, fam'd to be fo great ;
 Calling a great part of my dowry in question ?

Phi. Madam, this truth, which I fhall fpeak, will
 feem

Foolifh : But for your fair and virtuous felf,
 I could afford myfelf to have no right
 To any thing you wifh'd.

Are. Philafter, know,

I muft enjoy thefe kingdoms, of Calabria
 And Sicily : By fate, I die, Philafter,
 If I not calmly may enjoy them both.

Phi. I would do much to fave that noble life ;
 Yet would be loth to have pofterity
 Find in our ftories, that Philafter gave
 His right unto a fceptre, and a crown,
 To fave a lady's longing.

Are. Nay, then hear :

I muft, and will have them, and more.

Phi. What more ? Say, you would have my life ;
 Why, I will give it you ; for it is of me
 A thing fo loath'd, and unto you that ask
 Of fo poor ufe, I will unmov'dly hear.

Are. Fain would I fpeak, and yet the words are fuch
 I have to fay, and do fo ill befeem
 The mouth of woman, that I wifh them faid,

And

And yet am loth to utter them.—Oh, turn
 Away thy face!—a little bend thy looks!—
 Spare, spare me, oh, Philaster!

Phi. What means this?

Are. But that my fortunes hang upon this hour,
 But that occasion urges me to speak,
 And that perversely to keep silence now
 Would doom me to a life of wretchedness,
 I could not thus have summon'd thee, to tell thee,
 The thoughts of Pharamond are scorpions to me,
 More horrible than danger, pain or death!
 Yes—I must have thy kingdoms—must have thee!

Phi. How! me?

Are. Thy love!—without which all the land
 Discover'd yet, will serve me for no use
 But to be buried in.

Phi. Is't possible!

Are. With it, it were too little to bestow
 On thee: Now, though thy breath doth strike me
 dead,

(Which, know, it may) I have unript my breast.

Phi. Madam, you are too full of noble thoughts
 To lay a train for this contemned life,
 Which you may have for asking: To suspect
 Were base, where I deserve no ill. Love you?
 By all my hopes, I do, above my life:

But

But how this passion should proceed from you
So violently——

Are. Another soul, into my body shot,
Could not have fill'd me with more strength and spirit,
Than this thy breath : But spend not hasty time,
In seeking how I came thus : 'Tis the gods,
The gods, that make me so; and, sure, our love
Will be the nobler, and the better blest,
In that the secret justice of the gods
Is mingled with it. Let us leave and part,
Lest some unwelcome guest should fall betwixt.

Pbi. 'Twill be ill,
I should abide here long.

Are. 'Tis true, and worse
You should come often : How shall we devise
To hold intelligence, that our true loves
On any new occasion may agree
What path is best to tread ?

Pbi. I have a boy,
Sent by the gods, I hope, to this intent,
Not yet seen in the court. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain-side,
Of which he borrow'd some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears ;
A garland lay by him, made by himself,
Of many several flowers, bred in the bay,

Stuck

Stuck in that mystick order, that the rareness
 Delighted me: Butt ever when he turn'd
 His tender eyes upon 'em, he would weep,
 As if he meant to make 'em grow again.
 Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
 Dwell in his face, I ask'd him all his story;
 He told me, that his parents gentle died,
 Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
 Which gave him roots; and of the crystal springs,
 Which did not stop their courses; and the sun,
 Which still, he thank'd him, yielded him his light;
 Then took he up his garland, and did shew
 What every flower, as country people hold,
 Did signify; and how all, order'd thus,
 Express his grief; and to my thoughts did read
 The prettiest lecture of his country art
 That could be wish'd: So that, methought, I could
 Have studied it. I gladly entertain'd him,
 Who was as glad to follow; and have got
 The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy,
 That ever master kept: Him will I send
 To wait on you, and bear out hidden love.

Enter Lady.

Are. 'Tis well; no more.

Lady. Madam, the prince is come to do his service.

Are

Are. What will you do, Philaster, with yourself?
Dear, hide thyself. Bring in the prince.

Phi. Hide me from Pharamond!

When thunder speaks, which is the voice of Jove,
Though I do reverence, yet I hide me not.

Are. Then, good Philaster, give him scope and
way

In what he says; for he is apt to speak
What you are loth to hear: For my sake do.

Phi. I will.

Enter Pharamond.

Pha. My princely mistress, as true lovers ought,
I come to kiss these fair hands; and to shew,
In outward ceremonies, the dear love
Writ in my heart.

Phi. If I shall have an answer no directlier,
I am gone.

Pha. To what would he have answer?

Are. To his claim unto the kingdom.

Pha. I did forbear you, Sir, before the king.

Phi. Good Sir, do so still; I would not talk with
you.

Pha. But now the time is fitter.

Phi. Pharamond!

I loath to brawl with such a blast as thou,

Who

Who art nought but a vallant voice : But if
Thou shalt provoke me further, men shall say
' Thou wert,' and not lament it.

Pha. Do you slight

My greatness so, and in the chamber of the prince's ?

Phi. It is a place to which, I must confess,
I owe a reverence: But were't the church,
Ay, at the altar, there's no place so safe,
Where thou dar'st injure me, but I dare punish thee:
Farewell. [Exit Philaster.]

Pha. Insolent boaster ! offer but to mention
Thy right to any kingdom—

Are. Let him go ;
He is not worth your care.

Pha. My Arethusa !
I hope our hearts are knit ; and yet so flow
State ceremonies are, it may be long
Before our hands be so : If then you please,
Being agreed in heart, let us not wait
For pomp and circumstance, but solemnize
A private nuptial, and anticipate
Delights, and so foretaste our joys to come.

Are. My father, Sir, is all in all to me ;
Nor can I give my fancy or my will
More scope than he shall warrant. When he bids
My eye look up to Pharamond for lord,

I know my duty; but, till then, farewell. [*Exit.*

Pha. Nay!—but there's more in this—some happier man!

Perhaps Philaster!—'Sdeath! let me not think on't.

—She must be watch'd—He too must be ta'en care of,

Or all my hopes of her and empire rest

Upon a sandy bottom.—If she means

To wed me, well; if not, I swear revenge. [*Exit.*

A C T II.

Scene, an apartment in the palace.

Enter Philaster and Bellario.

Philaster.

AND thou shalt find her honourable, boy;
Full of regard unto thy tender youth.
For thine own modesty, and for my sake,
Apter to give, than thou wilt be to ask,
Ay, or deserve.

Bel Sir, you did take me up
When I was nothing; and only yet am something
By being yours: You trusted me unknown;
And that which you are apt to construe now

A simple

A simple innocence in me, perhaps
 Might have been craft, the cunning of a boy
 Harden'd in lies and theft; yet ventur'd you
 To part my miseries and me: For which,
 I never can expect to serve a lady,
 That bears more honour in her breast than you.

Phi. But, boy, it will prefer thee; thou art young,
 And bear'st a childish overflowing love
 To them that clap thy cheeks, and speak thee fair.
 But when thy judgment comes to rule those passions,
 Thou wilt remember best those careful friends
 That plac'd thee in the noblest way of life.
 She is a princess I prefer thee to.

Bel. In that small time that I have seen the world,
 I never knew a man hasty to part with
 A servant he thought trusty: I remember,
 My father would prefer the boys he kept
 To greater men than he; but did it not,
 'Till they were grown too saucy for himself.

Phi. Why, gentle boy, I find no fault at all
 In thy behaviour.

Bel. Sir, if I have made
 A fault of ignorance, instruct my youth;
 I shall be willing, if not apt, to learn;
 Age and experience will adorn my mind
 With larger knowledge: And if I have done

A wilful fault, think me not past all hope
 For once. What master holds so strict a hand
 Over his boy, that he will part with him
 Without one warning? Let me be corrected,
 To break my stubbornness, if it be so,
 Rather than turn me off, and I shall mend.

Phi. Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay,
 That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
 Alas! I do not turn thee off; thou know'st,
 It is my business that doth call thee hence;
 And, when thou art with her, thou dwell'st with me;
 Think so, and 'tis so; and when time is full,
 That thou hast well discharg'd this heavy trust,
 Laid on so weak a one, I will again
 With joy receive thee; as I live, I will.
 Nay, weep not, gentle boy. 'Tis more than time
 Thou didst attend the princess.

Bel. I am gone;
 But since I am to part with you, my lord,
 And none knows whether I shall live to do
 More service for you, take this little prayer:
 Heav'n bless your loves, your fights, all your designs!
 May sick men, if they have your wish, be well!
 And Heav'n hate those you curse, though I be one!

[*Exit.*

Phi. The love of boys unto their lords is strange!
 I have

I have read wonders of it! yet this boy,
 For my sake (if a man may judge by looks
 And speech) would out-do story. I may see
 A day to pay him for his loyalty. [Exit.

Scene changes to Arethusa's apartment.

Enter Arethusa and a Lady.

Are. Where's the boy? where's Bellario?

Lady. Within, madam.

Are. Gave you him gold to buy him clothes?

Lady. I did.

Are. And has he done't?

Lady. Madam, not yet.

Are. 'Tis a pretty fad-talking boy; is it not?

Enter Galatea.

Are. Oh, you are welcome! What good news?

Gal. As good as any one can tell your grace,
 That says she has done that you would have wish'd.

Are. Hast thou discover'd then?

Gal. I have. Your prince,
 Brave Pharamond's disloyal.

Are. And with whom?

Gal. Ev'n with the lady we suspect; with Megra.

Are. Oh, where? and when?

Gal. I can discover all.

Are. The king shall know this; and if destiny,
 To whom we dare not say, 'It shall not be,'
 Have not decreed it so in lasting leaves,
 Whose smallest characters were never chang'd,
 This hated match with Pharamond shall break.
 Run back into the presence, mingle there
 Again with other ladies; leave the rest
 To me. Where is the boy? [Exit Gal.

Lady. Here, madam.

Enter Bellario.

Are. Why art thou ever melancholy, Sir?
 You are sad to change your service: Is't not so?

Bel. Madam, I have not chang'd; I wait on you,
 To do him service.

Are. Thou disclaim'st in me.
 Tell me, Bellario, thou can'st sing and play?

Bel. If grief will give me leave, madam, I can.

Are. Alas! what kind of grief can thy years
 know?

Had'st a curst master when thou went'st to school?

Thou art not capable of other grief;

Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be,
 When no breath troubles them: Believe me, boy,
 Care seeks out wrinkled brows and hollow eyes,
 And builds himself caves to abide in them.

Come,

Come, Sir, tell me truly, does your lord love me?

Bel. Love, madam? I know not what it is.

Are. Canst thou know grief, and never yet
knew'st love?

Thou art deceiv'd, boy. Does he speak of me,
As if he wish'd me well?

Bel. If it be love;

To forget all respect of his own friends,
In thinking on your face; if it be love,
To sit cross-arm'd, and sigh away the day,
Mingled with starts, crying your name as loud
And hastily, as men i' th' streets do fire;
If it be love, to weep himself away,
When he but hears of any lady dead,
Or kill'd, because it might have been your chance;
If, when he goes to rest (which will not be)
'Twi'xt ev'ry prayer he says, he names you once
As others drop a bead; be to be in love,
Then, madam, I dare swear he loves you.

Are. Oh!

You are a cunning boy, taught to deceive,
For your lord's credit: But thou know'st a falshood
That bears this found, is welcomer to me,
Than any truth, that says, he loves me not.
Lead the way, boy. Do you attend me too;
'Tis thy lord's business hastes me thus. Away. [*Exe.*

Scene changes to another apartment in the palace.

Enter Megra and Pharamond.

Megra. What then am I? a poor neglected stale?
Have I then been an idle toying she,
To fool away an hour or two withal,
And then thrown by for ever?

Pha. Nay, have patience!

Megra. Patience! I shall go mad! why, I shall be
A mark for all the pages of the court
To spend their wit upon!

Pha. It shall not be.

She, whose dishonour is not known abroad,
Is not at all dishonour'd.

Megra. Not dishonour'd!

Have we then been so chary of our fame,
So cautious, think you, in our course of love
No blot of calumny has fall'n upon it? Say,
What charm has veil'd suspicion's hundred eyes,
And who shall stop the cruel hand of scorn?

Pha. Cease your complaints, reproachful and
unkind!

What could I do? Obedience to my father,
My country's good, my plighted faith, my fame,
Each circumstance of state and duty, ask'd
The tender of my hand to Arethusa.

Megra.

Megra. Talk not of Arethusa ! She, I know,
 Would fain get rid of her most precious bargain.
 She is for softer dalliance ; she has got
 A cherub, a young Hylas, an Adonis !

Pha. What mean you ?

Megra. She, good faith, has her Bellario !
 A boy—about eighteen—a pretty boy !
 Why, this is he that must when you are wed
 Sit by your pillow, like a young Apollo,
 Sing, play upon the lute, with hand and voice
 Binding your thoughts in sleep : She does provide
 him

For you and for herself.

Pha. Injurious *Megra* !

Oh, add not shame to shame ! to rob a lady
 Of her good name thus, is an heinous sin,
 Not to be pardon'd ; yet, though false as hell,
 'Twill never be redeem'd if it be fown
 Amongst the people, fruitful to increase
 All evil they shall hear.

Megra. It shall be known.

Nay, more, by heav'n 'tis true ! a thousand things
 Speak it, beyond all contradiction, true :
 Observe how brave she keeps him ; how he stands
 For ever at her beck ! There's not an hour,
 Sacred howe'er to female privacy,

But

Clere. Yes, madam.

Are. Wait you there. [Exit *Arethusa.*

Megra. She's jealous, as I live. Look you, my lord,

The princess has a boy!

Pha. His form is angel-like!

Dion. Serves he the princess?

Thra. Yes.

Dion. 'Tis a sweet boy!

Pha. Ladies all, good rest: I mean to kill a buck
To-morrow morning, ere you've done your dreams.

[Exit *Pharamond.*

Megra. All happiness attend your grace! gentlemen, good rest.

Gal. All, good night.

[*Exeunt Gal. and Megra.*

Dion. May your dreams be true to you!

What shall we do, gallants? 'Tis late. The king
Is up still. See, he comes, and *Arethusa*
With him.

Enter King, Arethusa and guard.

King. Look your intelligence be true.

Are. Upon my life, it is: And I do hope,
Your highness will not tie me to a man,
That in the heat of wooing throws me off,
And takes another.

Dion.

Dion. What should this mean?

King. If it be true,

That lady had much better have embrac'd
Cureless diseases. Get you to your rest.

[*Exeunt Arethusa and Bellarja.*]

You shall be righted. Gentlemen, draw near:
Haste, some of you, and cunningly discover
If Megra be in her lodging.

Clere. Sir,

She parted hence but now with other ladies.

King. I would speak with her.

Dion. She's here, my lord.

Enter Megra.

King. Now, lady of honour, where's your honour
now?

No man can fit your palate, but the prince.
Thou troubled sea of sin; thou wilderness
Inhabited by wild affections, tell me,
Had you none to pull on with your courtesies
But he that must be mine, and wrong my daughter?
By all the gods! all these, and all the court
Shall hoot thee, and break scurvy jests upon thee,
Make ribald rhimes, and fear thy name on walls.

Megra. I dare, my lord, your hootings and your
clamours.

Your

Your private whispers, and your broader leerings,
 Can no more vex my soul, than this base carriage,
 The poor destruction of a lady's honour,
 The publishing the weakness of a woman.
 But I have vengeance yet in store for some,
 Shall, in the utmost scorn you can have of me,
 Be joy and nourishment.

King. What means the wanton ?

D'ye glory in your shame ?

Megra. I will have fellows,

Such fellows in't, as shall make noble mirth.
 The princess, your dear daughter, shall stand by me
 On walls, and sung in ballads, any thing.

King. My daughter !

Megra. Yes, your daughter Arethusa,
 The glory of your Sicily, which I,
 A stranger to your kingdom, laugh to scorn.
 I know her shame, and will discover all :
 Nay, will dishonour her. I know the boy
 She keeps, a handsome boy, about eighteen ;
 Know what she does with him, and where, and
 when.

Come, Sir, you put me to a woman's madness,
 The glory of a fury.

King. What boy's this
 She raves about ?

Megra.

Megra. Alas, good-minded prince!

You know not these things: I will make them plain.

I will not fall alone: What I have known
Shall be as public as a print; all tongues
Shall speak it, as they do the language they
Are born in, as free and commonly: I'll set it
Like a prodigious star, for all to gaze at;
And that so high and glowing, other realms,
Foreign and far, shall read it there; and then
Behold the fall of your fair princess too. [*Exit.*

King. Has she a boy?

Cleric. So please your grace, I've seen
A boy wait on her, a fair boy.

King. Away! I'd be alone. Go, get you to
your quarters. [*Exeunt.*

Manet King.

You gods, I see, that who unrighteously
Holds wealth or state from others, shall be curst
In that which meaner men are blest withal:
Ages to come shall know no male of him
Left to inherit, and his name shall be
Blotted from earth. If he have any child,
It shall be crossly match'd. The gods themselves
Shall sow wild strife between her lord and her;
Or

Or she shall prove his curse, who gave her being,
 Gods! if it be your wills—but how can I
 Look to be heard of gods, who must be just,
 Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong?

[*Exit.*]

A C T III.

SCENE, *the Court.*

Enter Philaster.

O H, that I had a sea
 Within my breast, to quench the fire I feel!
 More circumstances will but fan this fire—
 It more afflicts me now, to know by whom
 This deed is done, than simply that 'tis done.
 Woman, frail sex! the winds that are let loose
 From the four several corners of the earth,
 And spread themselves all over sea and land,
 Kiss not a chaste one! Taken with her boy!
 O, that, like beasts, we could not grieve ourselves
 With what we see not! Bulls and rams will fight
 To keep their females standing in their fight;
 But take 'em from them, and you take at once

Their

Their spleens away ; and they will fall again
 Unto their pastures, growing fresh and fat ;
 And taste the water of the springs as sweet
 As 'twas before, finding no start in sleep.
 But miserable man—See, see, you gods,

[*Seeing Bellario at a distance.*

He walks still ! and the face, you let him wear
 When he was innocent, is still the same,
 Not blasted. Is this justice ? Do you mean
 To intrap mortality, that you allow
 Treason so smooth a Brow ?

Enter Bellario.

I cannot now
 Think he is guilty.

Bel. Health to you, my lord !
 The princess doth commend her love, her life,
 And this unto you. [*Gives a letter.*

Phi. Oh, Bellario,
 Now I perceive she loves me ; she does shew it
 In loving thee, my boy ; sh' has made thee brave.

Bel. My lord, she has attired me past my wish,
 Past my desert ; more fit for her attendant,
 Though far unfit for me, who do attend.

Phi. Thou art grown courtly, boy. Oh, let all
 women, [*Reads.*

That love black deeds, learn to dissemble here !
 Here, by this paper she does write to me,
 As if her heart were mines of adamant
 To all the world besides ; but, unto me,
 A maiden snow that melted with my looks.
 Tell me, my boy, how doth the princess use thee ?
 For I shall guess her love to me by that.

Bel. Scarce like her servant, but as if I were
 Something allied to her, or had preserv'd
 Her life three times by my fidelity :
 As mothers fond do use their only sons ;
 As I'd use one that's left unto my trust,
 For whom my life should pay, if he met harm ;
 So she does use me.

Phi. Why, this is wondrous well !
 But what kind language does she feed thee with ?

Bel. Why, she doestell me, she will trust my youth
 With all her loving secrets ; and does call me
 Her pretty servant ; bids me weep no more
 For leaving you ; she'll see my services
 Rewarded ; and such words of that soft strain,
 That I am nearer weeping when she ends
 Than ere she spake.

Phi. This is much better still.

Bel. Are you not ill, my lord ?

Phi. Ill ! no, Bellario.

Bel.

Bel. Methinks your words
 Fall not from off your tongue so evenly,
 Nor is there in your looks that quietness,
 That I was wont to see.

Pbi. Thou art deceiv'd, boy:
 And she strokes thy head?

Bel. Yes.

Pbi. And does clap thy cheeks?

Bel. She does, my lord.

Pbi. And she does kiss thee, boy? ha?

Bel. How, my lord!

Pbi. She kisses thee?

Bel. Not so, my lord.

Pbi. Come, come, I know she does.

Bel. No, by my life.

Pbi. Why, then she does not love me; come,
 she does,

I bad her do it; I charg'd her by all charms
 Of love between us, by the hope of peace
 We should enjoy, to yield thee all delights.
 Tell me, gentle boy,
 Is she not past compare? Is not her breath
 Sweet as Arabian winds, when fruits are ripe?
 Is she not all a lasting mine of joy?

Bel. Ay, now I see why my disturbed thoughts
 Were so perplex'd. When first I went to her,

My heart held augury ; you are abus'd ;
 Some villain has abus'd you : I do see
 Whereto you tend : Fall rocks upon his head,
 That put this to you ! 'tis some subtle train,
 To bring that noble frame of yours to nought.

Phi. Thou think'st, I will be angry with thee ;
 come,

Thou shalt know all my drift : I hate her more
 Than I love happiness ; and plac'd thee there,
 To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
 Hast thou discover'd ? Is she fall'n to lust,
 As I would wish her ? Speak some comfort to me.

Bel. My lord, you did mistake the boy you sent :
 Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
 Beyond the name of sin, I would not aid
 Her base desires ; but what I came to know
 As servant to her, I would not reveal,
 To make my life last ages.

Phi. Oh, my heart !
 This is a false worse than the main disease.
 Tell me thy thoughts ; for I will know the least
 That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart
 To know it ; I will see thy thoughts as plain
 As I do now thy face.

Bel. Why, so you do.
 She is (for aught I know) by all the gods,

As

As chaste as ice ; but were she foul as hell,
 And did I know it thus, the breath of kings,
 The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass,
 Should draw it from me.

Phi. Then it is no time
 To dally with thee ; I will take thy life,
 For I do hate thee ; I could curse thee now.

Bel. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse ;
 The gods have not a punishment in store
 Greater for me, than is your hate.

Phi. Fy, fy !
 So young and so difsembling ! Tell me when
 And where thou didst possess her, or let plagues
 Fall on me straight, if I destroy thee not !

Bel. Heav'n knows, I never did : And when I lie
 To save my life, may I live long and loath'd !
 Hew me asunder, and, whilst I can think,
 I'll love those pieces you have cut away,
 Better than those that grow ; and kiss those limbs,
 Because you made them so.

Phi. Fear'st thou not death ?
 Can boys contemn that ?

Bel. Oh, what boy is he
 Can be content to live to be a man,
 That sees the best of men thus passionate,
 Thus without reason ?

Phi. Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.

Bel. Yes, I do know, my lord; 'tis
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep,
A quiet resting from all jealousies;
A thing we all pursue: I know, besides,
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.

Phi. But there are pains, false boy,
For perjur'd souls; think but on these, and then
Thy heart will melt, and thou wilt utter all.

Bel. May they fall all upon me whilst I live,
If I be perjur'd, or have ever thought
Of that you charge me with! If I be false,
Send me to suffer in those punishments
You speak of! kill me.

Phi. Oh, what should I do?
Why, who can but believe him? He does swear
So earnestly, that if it were not true,
The gods would not endure him. Rise, Bellario;
Thy protestations are so deep, and thou
Dost look so truly, when thou utter'st them,
That though I know 'em false as were my hopes,
I cannot urge thee further: But thou wert
To blame to injure me; for I must love
Thy honest looks, and take no vengeance on

Thy

Thy tender youth: A love from me to thee
 Is firm what'er thou dost: It troubles me,
 That I have call'd the blood out of thy cheeks,
 That did so well become them. But, good boy,
 Let me not see thee more; Something is done,
 That will distract me, that will make me mad,
 If I behold thee; if thou tender'st me,
 Let me not see thee.

Bel. I will fly as far
 As there is morning, ere I give distaste
 To that most honour'd mind. But thro' these tears,
 Shed at my hopeless parting, I can see
 A world of treason practis'd upon you,
 And her, and me. Farewell, for evermore!
 If you shall hear, that sorrow struck me dead,
 And after find me loyal, let there be
 A tear shed from you in my memory,
 And I shall rest at peace. [*Exit Bel.*]

Phi. Blessing be with thee,
 Whatever thou deserv'st! Oh, where shall I
 Go bathe this body? Nature, too unkind,
 That made no med'cine for a troubled mind!
 [*Exit Phi.*]

Scene, Arethusa's apartment.

Enter Arethusa.

Are. I marvel, my boy comes not back again.

But that I know my love will question him
 Over and over; how I slept, wak'd, talk'd!
 How I remember'd him, when his dear name
 Was last spoke! and how, when I sigh'd, wept, sung,
 And ten thousand such! I should be angry at his stay.

Enter King.

King. What, at your meditations! Who attends
 you?

Are. None but my single self; I need no guard;
 I do no wrong, nor fear none.

King. Tell me, have you not a boy?

Are. Yes, Sir.

King. What kind of boy?

Are. A page, a waiting-boy.

King. A handsome boy?

Are. I think he be not ugly;

Well qualified, and dutiful, I know him;

I took him not for beauty.

King. He speaks, and sings, and plays?

Are. Yes, Sir.

King. About eighteen?

Are. I never ask'd his age.

King. Is he full of service?

Are. By your pardon, why do you ask?

King. Put him away.

Are.

Are. Sir!

King. Put him away; h' has done you that good service

Shames me to speak of.

Are. Good Sir, let me understand you.

King. If you fear me,

Shew it in duty; put away that boy.

Are. Let me have reason for it, Sir, and then
Your will is my command,

King. Do you not blush to ask it? Cast him off,
Or I shall do the same to you. You're one
Shame with me, and so near unto myself,
That, by my life, I dare not tell myself
What you have done.

Are. What have I done, my lord?

King. Understand me well;

There be foul whispers stirring; cast him off,
And suddenly do it. Farewell. [*Exit King.*]

Are. Where may a maiden live securely free,
Keeping her honour safe? Not with the living:
They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,
And make 'em truths: They draw a nourishment
Out of defamings, grow upon disgraces,
And when they see a virtue fortified
Strongly above the battery of their tongues,
Oh, how they cast to sink it! and defeated

(Soul-

(Soul-sick with poison) strike the monuments
Where noble names lie sleeping!

Enter Philaster.

Phi. Peace to your fairest thoughts, my dearest
mistress!

Are. Oh, my dear servant, I have a war within me.

Phi. He must be more than man, that makes
these crystals

Run into rivers. Sweetest, fair, the cause?

And as I am your slave, tied to your goodness,

Your creature made again from what I was,

And newly spirited, I'll right your honours.

Are. Oh, my best love; that boy!

Phi. What boy?

Are. The pretty boy you gave me—

Phi. What of him?

Are. Must be no more mine.

Phi. Why?

Are. They are jealous of him.

Phi. Jealous! who?

Are. The king.

Phi. Oh, my fortune!

Then 'tis no idle jealousy. Let him go.

Are. Oh, cruel,

Are you hard-hearted too? Who shall now tell you,

How

How much I lov'd you? Who shall swear it to you,
 And weep the tears I send? Who shall now bring
 you

Letters, rings, bracelets, lose his health in service?
 Wake tedious nights in stories of your praise?
 Who now shall sing your crying elegies,
 And strike a sad soul into senseless pictures,
 And make them mourn? Who shall take up his lute,
 And touch it, till he crown a silent sleep
 Upon my eyelid, making me dream and cry,
 Oh, my dear, dear Philaster!

Phi. Oh, my heart!

'Would he had broken thee, that made thee know
 This lady was not loyal! Mistress, forget
 The boy, I'll get thee a far better one.

Are. Oh, never, never, such a boy again,
 As my Bellario.

Phi. 'Tis but your fond affection.

Are. With thee, my boy, farewell for ever
 All secrecy in servants! Farewell faith,
 And all desire to do well for itself!
 Let all that shall succeed thee, for thy wrongs,
 Sell and betray chaste love!

Phi. And all this passion for a boy?

Are. He was your boy; you gave him to me, and
 The loss of such must have a mourning for,

Phi.

Phi. Oh, thou forgetful woman!

Are. How, my lord?

Phi. False Arethusa!

Haft thou a medicine to reftore my wits,
When I have loft 'em? If not, leave to talk,
And to do thus.

Are. Do what, Sir? Would you fleep?

Phi. For ever, Arethufa. Oh, you gods!
Give me a worthy patience: Have I ftood
Naked, alone, the flock of many fortunes?
Have I feen mifchiefs numberlefs, and mighty,
Grow like a fea upon me? Have I taken
Danger as ftern as death into my bofom,
And laugh'd upon it, made it but a mirth,
And flung it by? Do I live now like him,
Under this tyrant king, that languifhing
Hears his fad bell, and fees his mourners? Do I
Bear all this bravely, and muft fink at length
Under a woman's falshood? Oh, that boy,
That curfed boy! None but a villain boy,
To eafe your luft?

Are. Nay, then I am betray'd;
I feel the plot caft for my overthrow;
Oh, I am wretched!

Phi. Now you may take that little right I have
To this poor kingdom; give it to your boy!

For

For I have no joy in it. Some far place
Where never womankind durst set her foot,
For bursting with her poisons, must I seek,
And live to curse you.

There dig a cave, and preach to birds and beasts,
What woman is, and help to save them from you,
How Heav'n is in your eyes, but in your hearts
More hell than hell has; how your tongues, like
scorpions,

Both heal and poison; how your thoughts are woven
With thousand changes in one subtle web,
And worn so by you. How that foolish man,
That reads the story of a woman's face,
And dies believing it, is lost for ever.

How all the good you have, is but a shadow,
I' th' morning with you, and at night behind you,
Past and forgotten. How your vows are frost,
Fast for a night, and with the next sun gone.

How you are, being taken all together,
A mere confusion, and so dead a chaos,

That love cannot distinguish. These sad texts,
'Till my last hour, I am bound to utter of you.
So farewell all my woe, all my delight! [Exit.

Are. Be merciful, ye gods, and strike me dead!
What way have I deserv'd this? Make my breast
Transparent as pure crystal, that the world,

Jealous

Jealous of me, may see the foulest thought
My heart holds. Where shall a woman turn her eyes,
To find out constancy? Save me, how black,

Enter Bellario.

And guiltily, methinks, that boy looks now!
Oh, thou dissembler, that, before thou spak'st,
Wert in thy cradle false! Sent to make lies,
And betray innocents; thy lord and thou
May glory in the ashes of a maid
Fool'd by her passion; but the conquest is
Nothing so great as wicked. Fly away,
Let my command force thee to that, which shame
Should do without it. If thou understoodst
The loathed office thou hast undergone,
Why, thou wouldst hide thee under heaps of hills,
Lest men should dig and find thee.

Bel. Oh, what god,
Angry with men, hath sent this strange disease
Into the noblest minds? Madam, this grief
You add unto me is no more than drops
To seas, for which they are not seen to swell;
My lord hath struck his anger through my heart,
And let out all the hope of future joys:
You need not bid me fly; I come to part,
To take my latest leave.

I durst

I durst not run away in honesty,
 From such a lady, like a boy that stole,
 Or made some grievous fault. Farewell! The gods
 Assist you in your sufferings! Hasty time
 Reveal the truth to your abused lord,
 And mine; that he may know your worth! Whilst I
 Go seek out some forgotten place to die. [Exit.

Are. Peace guide thee! thou hast overthrown me
 once;

Yet, if I had another Heaven to lose,
 Thou, or another villain, with thy looks,
 Might talk me out of it.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Madam, the king would hunt, and calls
 for you
 With earnestness.

Are. I am in tune to hunt!
 Diana, if thou canst rage with a maid,
 As with a man, let me discover thee
 Bathing, and turn me to a fearful hind,
 That I may die pursu'd by cruel hounds,
 And have my story written in my wounds. [Exeunt.

A C T

A C T IV.

SCENE, *a wood.**Enter Philaster.*

OH, that I had been nourish'd in these woods
 With milk of goats, and acorns, and not
 known

The right of crowns, nor the dissembling trains
 Of womens' looks! but digg'd myself a cave,
 Where I, my fire, my cattle, and my bed,
 Might have been shut together in one shed;
 And then had taken me some mountain girl,
 Beaten with winds, chaste as the harden'd rocks
 Whereon she dwells; that might have strew'd my bed
 With leaves, and reeds, and with the skins of beasts
 Our neighbours; and have borne at her big breasts
 My large coarse issue! This had been a life
 Free from vexation.

Enter Bellario.

Bel. Oh, wicked men!
 An innocent may walk safe among beasts;
 Nothing assaults me here: See, my griev'd lord
 Looks

Looks as his soul were searching out the way
To leave his body. Pardon me, that must
Break thro' thy last command; for I must speak:
You, that are griev'd, can pity; hear, my lord.

Phi. Is there a creature yet so miserable,
That I can pity?

Bel. Oh, my noble lord,
View my strange fortune, and bestow on me,
According to your bounty (if my service
Can merit nothing) so much as may serve
To keep that little piece I hold of life
From cold and hunger.

Phi. Is it thou? Be gone:
Go, sell those misbecoming cloaths thou wear'st,
And feed thyself with them.

Bel. Alas! my lord, I can get nothing for them:
The silly country people think, 'tis treason
To touch such gay things.

Phi. Now, by my life, this is
Unkindly done, to vex me with thy sight;
Thou'rt fall'n again to thy dissembling trade:
How shouldst thou think to cozen me again?
Remains there yet a plague untried for me?
Ev'n so thou wept'st, and look'dst, and spok'st,
when first

I took thee up: Curse on the time! If thy

Commanding tears can work on any other,
Use thy old art, I'll not betray it. Which
Way wilt thou take? that I may shun thee; for
Thine eyes are poison unto mine; and I
Am loth to grow in rage. This way, or that way?

Bel. Any will serve. But I will chuse to have
That path in chace that leads unto my grave.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Dion and the Woodmen.

Dion. This is the strangest sudden chance! You,
woodman!

1 Wood. My lord Dion.

Dion. Saw you a lady come this way on a fable
horse, studded with stars of white?

2 Wood. Was she not young and tall?

Dion. Yes; rode she to the wood, or to the plain?

2 Wood. Faith, my lord, we saw none.

[*Exeunt Wood.*]

Dion. Pox of your questions then!

Enter Cleremont.

What, is she found?

Clere. Nor will be, I think. There's already a
thousand fatherless tales amongst us; some say, her
horse run away with her; some, a wolf pursued
her; others, it was a plot to kill her; and that
armed

armed men were seen in the wood: But, questionless, she rode away willingly.

Enter King and Thrasiline.

King. Where is she?

Clerc. Sir, I cannot tell.

King. How is that?

Sir, speak you where she is.

Dion. Sir, I do not know.

King. You have betray'd me, you have let me lose
The jewel of my life: Go, bring her me,
And set her here before me; 'tis the king
Will have it so. Alas! what are we kings?
Why do you, gods, place us above the rest;
To be serv'd, flatter'd, and ador'd, till we
Believe, we hold within our hands your thunder;
And when we come to try the pow'r we have,
There's not a leaf shakes at our threatenings?
I have sinn'd, 'tis true, and here stand to be punish'd;
Yet would not thus be punish'd.

Enter Pharamond, Galatea, and Megra.

King. What, is she found?

Pha. No, we have ta'en her horse.

He gallop'd empty by; there is some treason:
You, Galatea, rode with her into th' wood;
Why left you her?

Gal. She did command me.

King. You're all cunning

To obey us for our hurt; but I will have her.

Run all, disperse yourselves: The man that finds her,
Or (if she be kill'd) the traitor; I'll make him great.

Pha. Come, let us seek.

King. Each man a several way; here I myself.

[*Exeunt.*]

Another part of the wood.

Enter Arethusa.

Are. Where am I now? Feet, find me out a way,
Without the counsel of my troubled head;
I'll follow you boldly about these woods,
O'er mountains, thoro' brambles, pits, and floods:
Heaven, I hope, will ease me. I am sick.

Enter Bellario.

Bel. Yonder's my lady; Heav'n knows, I want
nothing,
Because I do not wish to live; yet I
Will try her charity. Oh, hear, you that have
plenty,
And from that flowing store, drop some on dry
ground: See,
The lively red is gone to guard her heart; [*she faints.*
I fear, she faints. Madam, look up; she breathes
not;

Open

Open once more those rosy twins, and send
 Unto my lord, your latest farewell; oh, she stirs:
 How is it, madam?

Are. 'Tis not gently done,
 To put me in a miserable life,
 And hold me there; I pray thee, let me go,
 I shall do best without thee; I am well.

Enter Philaster.

Pbi. I am to blame to be so much in rage:
 I'll tell her coolly, when, and where I heard
 This killing truth. I will be temperate
 In speaking, and as just in hearing it.
 Oh, monstrous! [*seeing them.*] Tempt me not, ye
 gods! good gods,
 Tempt not a frail man! what's he, that has a heart,
 But he must ease it here?

Bel. My lord, help the princess.

Are. I am well; forbear.

Pbi. Let me love lightning, let me be embrac'd
 And kiss'd by scorpions, or adore the eyes
 Of basilisks, rather than trust the tongues
 Of hell-bred women! Some good gods look down,
 And shrink these veins up! stick me here a stone,
 Lasting to ages, in the memory
 Of this damn'd act! Hear me, you wicked ones!

You have put hills of fire into this breast,
 Not to be quench'd with tears; for which may guilt
 Sit on your bosoms! at your meals, and beds,
 Despair await you! what, before my face?
 Poison of asps between your lips! Diseases
 Be your best issues! Nature make a curse,
 And throw it on you!

Are. Dear Philaster, leave
 To be enrag'd, and hear me.

Phi. I have done;
 Forgive my passion. Not the calmed sea,
 When Æolus locks up his windy brood,
 Is less disturb'd than I. I'll make you know it.
 Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword,
 And search how temperate a heart I have;
 Then you, and this your boy, may live and reign
 In lust, without controul. Wilt thou, Bellario?
 I prithee, kill me; thou art poor, and may'st
 Nourish ambitious thoughts, when I am dead;
 This way were freer.

Are. Kill you!

Bel. Not for a world.

Phi. I blame not thee,
 Bellario; thou hast done but that which gods
 Would have transform'd themselves to do! be gone,
 Leave me without reply; this is the last

Of

Of all our meeting. Kill me with this sword!
 Be wise, or worse will follow; we are two
 Earth cannot bear at once. Resolve to do, or
 suffer.

Are. If my fortunes be so good to let me fall
 Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.
 Yet tell me this, will there be no slanders,
 No jealousies in the other world, no ill there?

Phi. No.

Are. Shew me then the way.

Phi. Then guide

My feeble hand, you that have pow'r to do it!
 For I must perform a piece of justice. If your youth
 Have any way offended Heav'n, let pray'rs
 Short and effectual reconcile you to it!

Enter a country fellow.

Coun. I will see the king if he be in the forest; I
 have hunted him these two hours; if I should come
 home and not see him, my sisters would laugh at
 me. There's a courtier with his sword drawn, by
 this hand, upon a woman, I think.

Are. I am prepar'd.

Phi. Are you at peace?

Are. With Heav'n and earth.

Phi. May they divide thy soul and body!

Coun. Hold, dastard! offer to strike a woman!
 [preventing him.]

Phi. Leave us, good friend.

Are. What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself

Upon our private sports, our recreations?

Coun. I understand you not; but I know the knave would have hurt you.

Phi. Pursue thy own affairs; it will be ill To multiply blood upon my head, which thou wilt force me to.

Coun. I know not your rhetorick; but I can lay it on, if you offer to touch the woman.

Phi. Slave, take what thou deserv'st. [they fight.]

Are. Heav'ns guard my lord!

Bel. Unmanner'd boor!—my lord!—

[interposing, is wounded.]

Phi. I hear the tread of people: I am hurt. The gods take part against me; could this boor Have held me thus else? I must shift for life, Though I do loath it. [Exeunt *Phi.* and *Bel.*]

Coun. I cannot follow the rogue.

Enter Pharamond, Dion, Clerement, Thrasiline, and Woodmen.

Pha. What art thou?

Coun.

Coun. Almost kill'd I am for a foolish woman ;
a knave would have hurt her.

Pha. The princefs, gentlemen !

Dion. 'Tis above wonder ! Who should dare do
this ?

Pha. Speak, villain, who would have hurt the
princefs ?

Coun. Is it the princefs ?

Dion. Ay.

Coun. Then I have feen something yet.

Pha. But who would have hurt her ?

Coun. I told you, a rogue ; I ne'er faw him
before, I.

Pha. Madam, who was it ?

Are. Some difhoneft wretch ;

Alas ! I know him not, and do forgive him.

Coun. He's hurt himself, and foundly too, he
cannot go far ; I made my father's old fox fly about
his ears.

Pha. How will you have me kill him ?

Are. Not at all,

'Tis some diftracted fellow.

If you do take him, bring him quick to me,

And I will ftudy for a punishment,

Great as his fault.

Pha. I will.

Are.

Are. But swear.

Pha. By all my love, I will :

Woodmen, conduct the princess to the king,
And bear that wounded fellow unto dressing :
Come, gentlemen, we'll follow the chace close.

[*Exe. Are. Pha. Dion, Clere. Thra. and 1 Wood.*]

Coun. I pray you, friend, let me see the king.

2 Wood. That you shall, and receive thanks.

Coun. If I get clear of this, I'll go see no more
gay fights. [Exeunt.]

Scene, another part of the wood.

Enter Bellario, with a scarf.

Bel. Yes, I am hurt ; and 'would to Heav'n it
were

A death's wound to me ! I am faint and weak,
With loss of blood : My spirits ebb apace :
A heaviness near death sits on my brow,
And I must sleep : Bear me, thou gentle bank,
For ever, if thou wilt ; you sweet ones all,
Let me unworthy press you : I could wish,
I rather were a corpse strew'd over with you,
Than quick above you. Dullness shuts mine eyes,
And I am giddy. Oh ! that I could take
So sound a sleep, that I might never wake.

Enter

Enter Philaster.

Phi. I have done ill; my conscience calls me false.

What, strike at her, that would not strike at me!
 When I did fight, methought, I heard her pray
 The gods to guard me. She may be abus'd,
 And I a loathed villain: If she be,
 She'll not discover me; the slave has wounds,
 And cannot follow, neither knows he me.
 Who's this? Bellario sleeping! If thou beest
 Guilty, there is no justice that thy sleep
 Should be so sound; and mine, whom thou hast
 wrong'd,
 So broken.

Bel. Who is there? my lord Philaster!

[A cry within.

Hark! you are pursu'd; fly, fly my lord! and save
 Yourself.

Phi. How's this! wouldst thou I should be safe?

Bel. Else were it vain for me to live; oh, seize,
 My lord, these offer'd means of your escape!
 The princess, I am sure, will ne'er reveal you;
 They have no mark to know you, but your wounds;
 I, coming in betwixt the boor and you,
 Was wounded too. To stay the loss of blood
 I did bind on this scarf, which thus

I tear

I tear away. Fly! and 'twill be believ'd
'Twas I assail'd the princefs.

Phi. O heavens!

What hast thou done? Art thou then true to me?

Bel. Or let me perish loath'd! come, my good lord,
Creep in amongst those bushes: Who does know,
But that the gods may save your much-lov'd breath?

Phi. Oh, I shall die for grief! what wilt thou do?

Bel. Shift for myself well: Peace, I hear'em come!

Within. Follow, follow, follow; that way they
went.

Bel. With my own wounds I'll bloody my own
sword!

I need not counterfeit to fall; Heav'n knows
That I can stand no longer.

Enter Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, &c.

Pha. To this place we have track'd him by his
blood.

Clere. Yonder, my lord, creeps one away.

Dion. Stay, Sir, what are you?

Bel. A wretched creature wounded in these woods
By beasts! relieve me, if your names be men,
Or I shall perish!

Dion. This is he, my lord,
Upon my soul, assail'd her; 'tis the boy,

That

That wicked boy, that serv'd her.

Pha. Oh, thou damn'd
In thy creation! what cause couldst thou shape
To hurt the princess?

Bel. Then I am betray'd.

Dion. Betray'd! no, apprehended.

Bel. I confess,
Urge it no more, that, big with evil thoughts,
I set upon her, and did make my aim
Her death. For charity, let fall at once
The punishment you mean, and do not load
This weary flesh with tortures!

Pha. I will know
Who hir'd thee to this deed.

Bel. My own revenge.

Pha. Revenge, for what?

Bel. It pleas'd her to receive
Me as her page, and, when my fortunes ebb'd,
That men strid o'er them careless, she did shower
Her welcome graces on me, and did swell
My fortunes, till they overflow'd their banks,
Threatning the men that crost 'em; when, as swift
As storms arise at sea, she turn'd her eyes
To burning furs upon me, and did dry
The streams she had bestow'd; leaving me worse,
And more contemn'd than other little brooks,
Because

Because I had been great : In short, I knew
I could not live, and therefore did desire
To die reveng'd.

Pha. If tortures can be found,
Long as thy natural life, prepare to feel
The utmost rigour.

Clere. Help to lead him hence.

Philaster comes forth.

Phi. Turn back, you ravishers of innocence!
Know ye the price of that you bear away
So rudely?

Pha. Who's that?

Dion. 'Tis the lord Philaster.

Phi. 'Tis not the treasure of all kings in one,
The wealth of Tagus, nor the rocks of pearl
That pave the court of Neptune, can weigh down
That virtue. It was I assail'd the princess.
Place me, some god, upon a piramis,
Higher than hills of earth, and lend a voice
Loud as your thunder to me, that from thence
I may discourse to all the under-world
The worth that dwells in him!

Pha. How's this?

Bel. My lord, some man
Weary of life, that would be glad to die.

Phi.

Phi. Leave these untimely courtesies, Bellario.

Bel. Alas ! he's mad ; come, will you lead me on ?

Phi. By all the oaths that men ought most to keep,
And gods do punish most, when men do break,
He touch'd her not. Take heed, Bellario,
How thou dost drown the virtues, thou hast shewn,
With perjury. By all that's good, 'twas I :
You know, she stood betwixt me and my right.

Pha. Thy own tongue be thy judge.

Clere. It was Philaster.

Dion. Is't not a brave boy ?

Well, Sirs, I fear me, we are all deceiv'd.

Phi. Have I no friend here ?

Dion. Yes.

Phi. Then shew it ; some

Good body lend a hand to draw us nearer.

Would you have tears shed for you when you die ?

Then lay me gently on his neck, that there

I may weep floods, [*they lead him to Bellario*] and
there breathe out my spirit :

'Tis not the wealth of Plutus, nor the gold

Lock'd in the heart of earth can buy away

This arm-full from me. You hard-hearted men,

More stony than these mountains, can you see

Such clear pure blood drop, and not cut your flesh

To stop his life ? to bind whose bitter wounds,

Queens

Queens ought to tear their hair, and with their tears
Bathe 'em. Forgive me, thou that art the wealth
Of poor Philaster!

Enter King, Arethusa, and a guard.

King. Is the villain ta'en?

Pha. Sir, here be two confests the deed; but say
it was Philaster.

Phi. Question it no more, it was.

King. The fellow, that did fight with him, will
tell us.

Are. Ah me! I know he will.

King. Did not you know him?

Are. No, Sir; if it was he, he was disguised.

Phi. I was so. Oh, my stars! that I should live still.

King. Thou ambitious fool!

Thou that hast laid a train for thy own life;
Now I do mean to do, I'll leave to talk.
Bear him to prison.

Are. Sir, they did plot together to take hence
This harmless life; should it pass unreveng'd,
I should to earth go weeping: Grant me then
(By all the love a father bears his child)
The custody of both, and to appoint
Their tortures and their death.

King. 'Tis granted: take 'em to you, with a guard.
Come,

Come, princely Pharamond, this business past,
 We may with more security go on
 To your intended match.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T V.

SCENE, *the Palace.*

Enter Philaster, Arethusa and Bellario.

Arethusa.

NA Y, dear Philaster, grieve not! we are well.

Bel. Nay, good my lord, forbear; we are
 wondrous well.

Phi. Oh, Arethusa! oh, Bellario! leave to be
 kind:

I shall be shot from Heav'n, as now from earth,
 If you continue so. I am a man,
 False to a pair of the most trusty ones
 That ever earth bore. Can it bear us all?
 Forgive, and leave me! but the king hath sent
 To call me to my death: oh, shew it me,
 And then forgive me. And for thee, my boy,
 I shall deliver words will mollify
 The hearts of beasts, to spare thy innocence.

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G

Bel.

Bel. Alas, my lord, my life is not a thing
 Worthy your noble thoughts ; 'tis not a life,
 'Tis but a piece of childhood thrown away :
 Should I out-live you, I should then out-live
 Virtue and honour ; and, when that day comes,
 If ever I shall close these eyes but once,
 May I live spotted for my perjury,
 And waste my limbs to nothing !

Are. And I (the woful'st maid that ever was,
 Forc'd with my hands to bring my lord to death)
 Do by the honour of a virgin swear,
 To tell no hours beyond it.

Phi. Make me not hated so:
 People will tear me, when they find you true
 To such a wretch as I ; I shall die loath'd.
 Enjoy your kingdoms peaceably, whilst I
 For ever sleep forgotten with my faults.
 Ey'ry just servant, ev'ry maid in love,
 Will have a piece of me, if you be true.

Are. My dear lord, say not so.

Bel. A piece of you !

He was not born of woman that can cut
 It and look on.

Phi. Take me in tears betwixt you,
 For else my heart will break with shame and sorrow.

Are. Why, 'tis well.

Bel.

Bel. Lament no more.

Phi. What would you have done
If you had wrong'd me basely, and had found
My life no price, compar'd to yours? For love, Sirs,
Deal with me plainly.

Bel. 'Twas mistaken, Sir.

Phi. Why, if it were?

Bel. Then, Sir, we would have ask'd you pardon.

Phi. And have hope to-enjoy it?

Are. Enjoy it! ay.

Phi. Would you, indeed? be plain.

Bel. We would, my lord.

Phi. Forgive me then!

Are. So, so.

Bel. 'Tis as it should be now.

Phi. Lead to my death! [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Presence Chamber.

Enter King, Dion, Cleremont, and Thrasiline.

King. Gentlemen, who saw the prince?

Clere. So please you, Sir, he's gone to see the city,
And the new platform, with some gentlemen
Attending on him.

King. Is the princess ready
To bring her prisoner out?

Thra. She waits your grace.

King. Tell her we stay.

G 2

Enter

Enter a Messenger.

Mef. Where's the king?

King. Here.

Mef. To your strength, O king,
And rescue the prince Pharamond from danger.
He's taken prisoner by the citizens,
Fearing the lord Philaster.

Enter another Messenger.

Mef. Arm, arm, O king, the city is in mutiny,
Led by an old grey ruffian, who comes on
In rescue of the lord Philaster, [Exit.

King. Away to th' citadel; I'll see them safe,
And then cope with these burghers: Let the guard
And all the gentlemen give strong attendance.

[Exit king.

Manent Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline.

Clere. The city up! this was above our wishes.

Dion. Well, my dear countrymen, if you continue,
and fall not back upon the first broken shin, I'll have
you chronicled, and chronicled, and cut and chro-
nicled, and sung in all-to-be-prais'd sonnets, and
grav'd in new brave ballads, that all tongues shall
troule you *in sæcula sæculorum*, my kind can-carriers!

Thra. What if a toy take 'em i'th' heels now,
and they all run away, and cry, 'the devil take the
hindmost?'

Dion,

Dion. Then the same devil take the foremost too,
And sowce him for his breakfast! If they all prove
cowards,

My curses fly among them and be speeding!
May they have murrains reign to keep the gentlemen
At home, unbound in easy freeze!
May the moths branch their velvets! may their
false lights

Undo 'em, and discover presses, holes, stains,
And oldness in their stuffs, and make them shop-rid!
May they keep whores and horses, and break;
And live mew'd up with necks of beef and turnips!
May they have many children, and none like the
father!

May they know no language but that gibberish
They prattle to their parcels, unless it be
The Gothick Latin they write in their bonds,
And may they write that false, and lose their debts!

Enter the King.

King. 'Tis Philaster,
None but Philaster, must allay this heat:
They will not hear me speak; but call me tyrant.
My daughter and Bellario too declare,
Were he to die, that they would both die with him.
Oh run, dear friend, and bring the lord Philaster;
Speak him fair; call him Prince; do him all

The courtesy you can ; commend me to him.
I have already given orders for his liberty.

Clere. My lord, he's here.

Enter Philaster.

King. O worthy Sir, forgive me ; do not make
Your miseries and my faults meet together,
To bring a greater danger. Be yourself,
Still found amongst diseases. I have wrong'd you,
And though I find it last, and beaten to it,
Let first your goodness know it. Calm the people,
And be what you were born to : Take your love,
And with her my repentance, and my wishes,
And all my pray'rs : By th' gods, my heart speaks this:
And if the least fall from me not perform'd,
May I be struck with thunder !

Phi. Mighty Sir,

I will not do your greatness so much wrong,
As not to make your word truth ; free the princess
And the poor boy, and let me stand the flock
Of this mad sea-breach, which I'll either turn
Or perish with it.

King. Let your own word free them.

Phi. Then thus I take my leave, kissing your hand,
And hanging on your royal word : Be kingly,
And be not mov'd, Sir ; I shall bring you peace,
Or never bring myself back.

King. All the gods go with thee !

[*Exeunt.*
Scene,

Scene, a street in the city.

Enter an old captain and citizens, with Pharamond.

Capt. Come, my brave myrmidons, let us fall on ;
let our caps swarm, my boys, and your nimble
tongues forget your mothers' gibberish, of what do
you lack, and set your mouths' up, children, till
your palates fall frighted half a fathom, past the
cure of bay-salt and gros pepper, and then cry Phi-
laster, brave Philaster !

All. Philaster ! Philaster !

Capt. How do you like this, my lord prince ?

Pha. You will not see me murder'd, wicked
villains ?

Enter Philaster.

All. Long live Philaster, the brave prince
Philaster !

Pbi. I thank you, gentlemen ; but why are these
Rude weapons brought abroad, to teach your hands
Uncivil trades ?

Capt. My royal Roficlear,
We are thy myrmidons, thy guard, thy roarers ;
And when thy noble body is in durance,
Thus we do clap our musty murrions on,
And trace the streets in terror : Is it peace,

Thou Mars of men? Is the king sociable,
 And bids thee live? art thou above thy foemen,
 And free as Phœbus? Speak; if not, this stand
 Of royal blood shall be abroach, a-tilt, and run
 Even to the lees of honour.

Phi. Hold and be satisfied; I am myself,
 Free as my thoughts are; by the gods, I am.

Cap. Art thou the dainty darling of the king?
 Art thou the Hylas to our Hercules?
 Is the court navigable, and the presence stuck
 With flags of friendship? If not, we are thy castle,
 And this man sleeps.

Phi. I am what I desire to be, your friend;
 I am what I was born to be, your prince.

Pha. Sir, there is some humanity in you;
 You have a noble soul; forget my name,
 And know my misery; set me safe aboard
 From these wild canibals, and, as I live,
 I'll quit this land for ever.

Phi. I do pity you: Friends, discharge your fears;
 Deliver me the prince.

Good my friends, go to your houses, and by me have
 Your pardons, and my love;
 And know, there shall be nothing in my pow'r
 You may deserve, but you shall have your wishes.

All. Long may'st thou live, brave prince!

Brave

Brave prince ! brave prince !

[*Exeunt Phi. and Pha.*]

Capt. Go thy ways ; thou art the king of courtesy :
Fall off again, my sweet youths ; come, and every
man trace to his house again, and hang his pewter
up ; then to the tavern, and bring your wives in
muffs : We will have musick, and the red grape
shall make us dance and rise, boys ! [Exeunt.]

Scene changes to the court.

*Enter King, Arethusa, Galatea, Megra, Cleremont,
Dion, Thrasiline, Bellario, and attendants.*

King. Is it appeas'd ?

Dion. Sir, all is quiet as the dead of night,
As peaceable as sleep : My lord Philaster
Brings on the prince himself.

King. Kind gentleman !

I will not break the least word I have giv'n
In promise to him. I have heap'd a world
Of grief upon his head, which yet I hope
To wash away.

Enter Philaster and Pharamond.

Clere. My lord is come.

King. My son !

Blest be the time, that I have leave to call
Such virtue mine ! Now thou art in mine arms,
Methinks

Methinks I have a salve unto my breast
 For all the stings that dwell there : Streams of grief
 That I have wrong'd thee, and as much of joy
 That I repent it, issue from mine eyes :
 Let them appease thee ; take thy right ; take her,
 She is thy right too, and forget to urge
 My vexed soul with that I did before.

Phi. Sir, it is blotted from my memory,
 Past and forgotten. For you, prince of Spain,
 Whom I have thus redeem'd, you have full leave
 To make an honourable voyage home.
 And if you would go furnish'd to your realm
 With fair provision, I do see a lady,
 Methinks, would gladly bear you company.

Meg. Shall I then alone
 Be made the mark of obloquy and scorn ?
 Can shame remain perpetually in me,
 And not in others ? or have princes salves
 To cure ill names, that meaner people want ?

Phi. What mean you ?

Meg. You must get another ship
 To bear the princess and the boy together.

Dion. How now !

Meg. I have already publish'd both their shames.
 Ship us all four, my lord ; we can endure
 Weather and wind alike.

King.

King. Clear thou thyself, or know not me for father.

Are. This earth, how false it is! what means is left For me to clear myself? It lies in your belief. My lord, believe me, and let all things else Struggle together to dishonour me.

Bel. Oh, stop your ears, great king, that I may speak

As freedom would: Then I will call this lady
As base as be her actions. Hear me, Sir;
Believe your hated blood when it rebels
Against your reason, sooner than this lady.

Phi. This lady? I will sooner trust the wind
With feathers, or the troubled sea with pearl,
Than her with any thing: Believe her not?
Why, think you, if I did believe her words,
I would outlive 'em? Honour cannot take
Revenge on you; then what were to be known
But death?

King. Forget her, Sir, since all is knit
Between us: But I must request of you
One favour, and will sadly be denied.

Phi. Command, whate'er it be.

King. Swear to be true
To what you promise.

Phi. By the pow'rs above,

Let

Let it not be the death of her or him,
And it is granted.

King. Bear away the boy
To torture. I will have her clear'd or buried.

Phi. Oh, let me call my words back, worthy Sir;
Ask something else: Bury my life and right
In one poor grave; but do not take away
My life and fame at once.

King. Away with him; it stands irrevocable.

Bel. Oh, kill me, gentlemen!

Dion. No help, Sirs.

Bel. Will you torture me?

King. Haste there; why stay you?

Bel. Then I shall not break my vow,
You know, just gods, though I discover all.

King. How's that? will he confess?

Dion. Sir, so he says.

King. Speak then.

Bel. Great king, if you'll command
This lord to talk with me alone, my tongue,
Urg'd by my heart, shall utter all the thoughts
My youth hath known, and stranger things than
these
You hear not often.

King. Walk aside with him.

[*Dion and Bell. walk aside together.*

Dion.

Dion. Why speak'st thou not?

Bel. Know you this face, my lord?

Dion. No.

Bel. Have you not seen it, nor the like?

Dion. Yes, I have seen the like, but readily
I know not where.

Bel. I have been often told
In court of one Euphrasia, a lady,
And daughter to you; betwixt whom and me,
They, that would flatter my bad face, would swear
There was such strange resemblance, that we two
Could not be known asunder, dress'd alike.

Dion. By Heav'n, and so there is.

Bel. For her fair sake,
Who now doth spend the spring-time of her life
In holy pilgrimage, move to the king,
That I may 'scape this torture.

Dion. But thou speak'st
As like Euphrasia, as thou dost look,
How came it to thy knowledge that she lives
In pilgrimage?

Bel. I know it not, my lord;
But I have heard it, and do scarce believe it.

Dion. Oh, my shame, is it possible? draw near,
That I may gaze upon thee: Art thou she?
Or else her murderer? where wert thou born?

Bel.

Bel. In Siracusa.

Dion. What's thy name?

Bel. Euphrasia.

Dion. 'Tis just; 'tis she; now I do know thee. Oh,
That thou hadst died, and I had never seen
Thee nor my shame!

Bel. 'Would I had died, indeed! I wish it too;
And so I must have done by vow, ere publish'd
What I have told; but that there was no means
To hide it longer; yet I joy in this,
The princess is all clear.

King. What have you done?

Dion. All is discover'd.

Are. What is discover'd?

Dion. Why, my shame;
It is a woman; let her speak the rest.

Phi. How! that again.

Dion. It is a woman.

Phi. Blest be you pow'rs that favour innocence!
It is a woman, Sir! hark, gentlemen!
It is a woman. Arethusa, take
My soul into thy breast, that would be gone
With joy: It is a woman—thou art fair,
And virtuous still to ages, 'spite of malice.

King. Speak you; where lies his shame?

Bel. I am his daughter.

Phi.

Phi. The gods are just. But, my Bellario,
(For I must call thee still so) tell me, why
Thou didst conceal thy sex; it was a fault;
A fault, Bellario, though thy other deeds
Of truth outweigh'd it: all these jealousies
Had flown to nothing, if thou hadst discover'd,
What now we know.

Bel. My father oft would speak
Your worth and virtue, and as I did grow
More and more apprehensive, I did thirst
To see the man so prais'd; but yet all this
Was but a maiden-longing, to be lost
As soon as found; till sitting in my window,
Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a God
I thought (but it was you) enter our gates;
My blood flew out, and back again as fast,
As I had puff'd it forth and suck'd it in
Like breath; then was I call'd away in haste
To entertain you. Never was a man,
Heav'd from a sheep-cote to a sceptre, rais'd
So high in thoughts as I; you left a kiss
Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep
From you for ever; I did hear you talk,
Far above singing; after you were gone
I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
What stirr'd it so: alas, I found it love;

Yet

Yet far from ill, for could I have but liv'd
 In presence of you, I had had my end ;
 For this I did delude my noble father
 With a feign'd pilgrimage, and dress'd myself
 In habit of a boy ; and, for I knew
 My birth no match for you, I was past hope
 Of having you : And understanding well
 That when I made discovery of my sex,
 I could not stay with you ; I made a vow,
 By all the most religious things a maid
 Could call together, never to be known,
 Whilst there was hope to hide me from mens'
 eyes

For other than I seem'd, that I might ever
 Abide with you ; then sat I by the fount,
 Where first you took me up.

King. Search out a match

Within our kingdom, where and when thou wilt,
 And I will pay thy dowry ; and thyself
 Wilt well deserve him.

Bel. Never, Sir, will I

Marry ; it is a thing within my vow.

Phi. I grieve, such virtues should be laid in earth
 Without an heir.—Hear me, my royal father,
 Wrong not the freedom of our souls so much,
 To think to take revenge of that base woman ;

Her

Her malice cannot hurt us ; set her free
As she was born, saving from shame and sin.

King. Well ! be it so. You, Pharamond,
Shall have free passage, and a conduct home
Worthy so great a prince ; when you come there,
Remember, 'twas your fault that lost you her,
And not my purpos'd will.

Pha. I do confes it.

King. Last, join your hands in one. Enjoy, Phi-
laster,

This kingdom, which is yours, and after me
Whatever I call mine ; my blessing on you !
All happy hours be at your marriage-joys,
That you may grow yourselves over all lands,
And live to see your plenteous branches spring
Where-ever there is sun !——Let princes learn
By this to rule the passions of their blood !
For what Heav'n wills, can never be withstood.

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K I N G L E A R.

A

T R A G E D Y.

WRITTEN BY

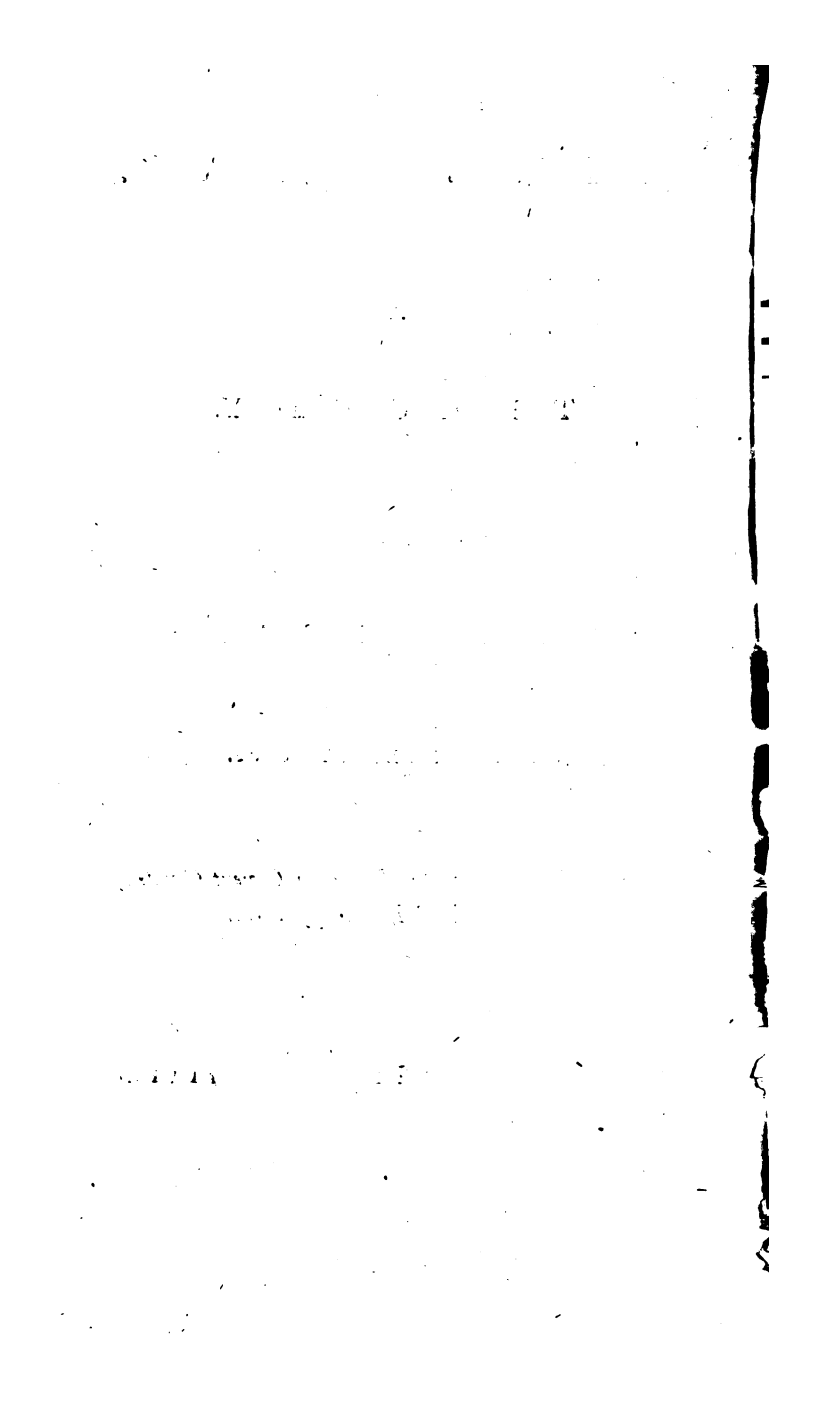
S H A K E S P E A R E.

WITH ALTERATIONS.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden,
on the 20th of February, 1768.*

H 2

ADVER-



ADVERTISEMENT.

“**T**HE Tragedy of Lear is deservedly celebrated among the dramas of Shakespeare. There is, perhaps, no play which keeps the attention so strongly fixed; which so much agitates our passions, and interests our curiosity. The artful involutions of distinct interests, the striking opposition of contrary characters, the sudden changes of fortune, and the quick succession of events, fill the mind with a perpetual tumult of indignation, pity, and hope. There is no scene which does not contribute to the aggravation of the distress, or conduct of the action; and scarce a line which does not conduce to the progress of the scene. So powerful is the current of the poet’s imagination, that the mind, which once ventures within it, is hurried irresistibly along.”

Such is the decision of Dr. Johnson on the Lear of Shakespeare. Yet Tate, with all this treasure before him, considered it as “a heap of jewels unstrung, and unpolished;” and resolved, “out of zeal for all the remains of Shakespeare,” to *new-model* the story. Having formed this resolution, “it was my good fortune (says he) to light

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

“ on one expedient to rectify what was wanting
“ in the regularity and probability of the tale;
“ which was to run through the whole, *a love*
“ betwixt Edgar and Cordelia, that never changed
“ word with each other in the original. This ren-
“ ders Cordelia’s indifference, and her father’s
“ passion, in the first scene, probable. It likewise
“ gives countenance to Edgar’s disguise, making
“ that a generous design, that was before a poor
“ shift to save his life. The distress of the story is
“ evidently heightened by it; and it particularly
“ gave occasion to a new scene or two, of more
“ success perhaps than merit.”

Now this very expedient of *a love* betwixt Edgar and Cordelia, on which Tate felicitates himself, seemed to me to be one of the capital objections to his alteration: For even supposing that it rendered Cordelia’s indifference to her father more probable (an indifference which Shakespeare has no where implied), it assigns a very poor motive for it; so that what Edgar gains on the side of romantick generosity, Cordelia loses on that of real virtue. The distress of the story is so far from being heightened by it, that it has diffused a languor and insipidity over all the scenes of the play from which Lear is absent; for which I appeal

to

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

to the sensations of the numerous audiences, with which the play has been honoured; and had the scenes been affectingly written, they would at least have divided our feelings, which Shakespeare has attached almost entirely to Lear and Cordelia, in their parental and filial capacities; thereby producing passages infinitely more tragick than the embraces of Cordelia and the ragged Edgar, which would have appeared too ridiculous for representation, had they not been mixed and incorporated with some of the finest scenes of Shakespeare.

Tate, in whose days *love* was the soul of Tragedy as well as Comedy, was, however, so devoted to intrigue, that he has not only given Edmund a passion for Cordelia, but has injudiciously amplified on his criminal commerce with Gonerill and Regan, which is the most disgusting part of the original. The Rev. Dr. Warton has doubted, "whether the cruelty of the daughters is not painted with circumstances too savage and unnatural *," even by Shakespeare. Still, however, in Shakespeare, some motives for their conduct are assigned; but as Tate has conducted that part of the fable, they are equally cruel and unnatural, without the poet's assigning any motive at all.

* *Advertiser*, No. 122.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

In all these circumstances, it is generally agreed, that Tate's alteration is for the worse; and his King Lear would probably have quitted the stage long ago, had not he made "the tale conclude in a success to the innocent distressed persons." Even in the catastrophe he has incurred the censure of Addison: but "in the present case, says Dr. Johnson, the publick has decided, and Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity."

To reconcile the catastrophe of Tate to the story of Shakespeare, was the first grand object which I proposed to myself in this alteration; thinking it one of the principal duties of my situation, to render every drama submitted to the publick, as consistent and rational an entertainment as possible. In this kind of employment, one person cannot do a great deal; yet if every director of the theatre will endeavour to do a little, the stage will every day be improved, and become more worthy attention and encouragement. Romeo, Cymbeline, Every Man in his Humour, have long been refined from the dross that hindered them from being current with the publick; and I have now endeavoured to purge the tragedy of Lear of the alloy of Tate, which has so long been suffered to debase it.

"The

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

“ The utter improbability of Gloucester’s imagin-
“ ing, though blind, that he had leaped down
“ Dover-Cliff,” has been justly censured by Dr.
Warton * ; and in the representation it is still more
liable to objection than in print. I have therefore,
without scruple, omitted it, preserving however,
at the same time, that celebrated description of
the cliff in the mouth of Edgar. The putting out
Gloucester’s eyes is also an unpleasing a circumstance,
that I would have altered it, if possible ; but, upon
examination, it appeared to be so closely inter-
woven with the fable, that I durst not venture to
change it. I had once some idea of retaining the
character of *the Fool* ; but though Dr. Warton has
very truly observed †, that the poet “ has so well
“ conducted even the natural jargon of the beggar,
“ and the jestings of the Fool, which in other hands
“ must have sunk into burlesque, that they contri-
“ bute to heighten the pathetick ;” yet, after the
most serious consideration, I was convinced that
such a scene “ would sink into burlesque” in the
representation, and would not be endured on the
modern stage.

* *Adventurer*, No. 122.

† *Adventurer*, No. 116.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LEAR, King of BRITAIN,	<i>Mr. Powell.</i>
King of FRANCE,	<i>Mr. Davis.</i>
Duke of BURGUNDY,	<i>Mr. Lewes.</i>
Duke of CORNWALL,	<i>Mr. Gardner.</i>
Duke of ALBANY,	<i>Mr. Hull.</i>
Earl of GLOCESTER,	<i>Mr. Gibfon.</i>
Earl of KENT,	<i>Mr. Clarke.</i>
EDGAR, fon to Glocefter,	<i>Mr. Smith.</i>
EDMUND, bastard fon to Glo'fter,	<i>Mr. Bensley.</i>
Doctor,	<i>Mr. Redman.</i>
Steward to Gonerill,	<i>Mr. Cushing.</i>
Captain,	<i>Mr. Wignell.</i>
Old Man, tenant to Glocefter,	<i>Mr. Hallam.</i>
Herald,	<i>Mr. Holtom.</i>
Servant to Cornwall,	<i>Mr. T. Smith.</i>

GONERILL,	} daughters to	{	<i>Mrs. Stephens.</i>
REGAN,			<i>Mrs. Du-Bellamy.</i>
CORDELIA,			<i>Mrs. Yates.</i>
	Lear,		

Knights attending on the king, officers, messengers,
soldiers and attendants.

SCENE, BRITAIN.

KING

K I N G L E A R.

A C T I.

SCENE, *the King's palace.*

Enter Kent, Gloucester, and Edmund the Bastard.

Kent.

I THOUGHT the king had more affected the duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Gloc. It did always seem so to us: But now in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Gloc. His breeding, Sir, hath been at my charge.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Gloc. Sir, this young fellow's mother had, indeed, a son for her cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Gloc.

Gloc. But I have a son, Sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account. Do you know this nobleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Gloc. My lord of Kent;—

Remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study your deserving.

[*Trumpets sound within.*]

Gloc. The king is coming.

Scene opens, and discovers King Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Gonerill, Regan, Cordelia, and attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Glo'ster.

Gloc. I shall, my liege. [Exit.]

Lear. Mean time we shall express our darker purpose:

Give me the map here. Know, we have divided,
In three, our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent,
'To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of
Cornwall,

And

And you, our no-less-loving son of Albany,
 We have this hour a constant will to publish
 Our daughters sev'ral dow'rs, that future strife
 May be prevented now. The princes France and
 Burgundy,

Great rivals in our younger daughter's love,
 Long in our court have made their am'rous so-
 journ,

And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, daughters,
 Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most?
 That we our largest bounty may extend,
 Where nature doth with merit challenge. Gonerill,
 Our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. I love you, Sir,
 Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
 Beyond what can be valu'd, rich or rare;
 No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
 As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found.
 A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
 Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cord. What shall Cordelia do? love, and be
 silent. * [*Aside.*

Lear. Of all these bounds, ev'n from this line to
 this,
 With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
 With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,

We

We make thee lady. To thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall? speak.

Regan. I'm made of that self mould, as is my
sister,

And prize me at her worth, in my true heart.
I find, she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Than your dear highness' love.

Cord. Then poor Cordelia!

[*Aside.*]

And yet not so, since I am sure my love's
More pond'rous than my tongue.

Lear. To thee, and thine, hereditary ever,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Gonerill.—Now our joy,
Altho' our last, not least; to whose young love,
The vines of France, and milk of Burgundy,
Strive to be int'res'd! what say you, to draw
A third, more opulent than your sisters? speak.

Cord. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing?

Cord. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing; speak again.

Cord. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave

My

My heart into my mouth : I love your majesty
According to my bond ; no more nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia ? mend your speech
a little ;

Lest you may mar your fortunes.

Cord. Good my lord,

You gave me being, bred me, lov'd me. I
Return those duties back, as are right fit ;
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say,
They love you, all ? hap'ly, when I shall wed,
That lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall
carry

Half my love with him, half my care and duty :
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this ?

Cord. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender ?

Cord. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so ; thy truth then be thy dower.

For by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night,
By all the operations of the orbs,
From whom we do exist, and cease to be :
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,

Pro-

Propinquity, and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever.

Kent. Good my liege——

Lear. Peace, Kent,

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nurs'ry. Hence, avoid my sight!—

[*To Cord.*

So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her; call France; who stirs?
Call Burgundy.—Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers, digest the third.
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Preheminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty. Ourself by monthly course,
With reservation of a hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns: only retain
The name and all th' addition to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution,
Beloved sons, be yours! which to confirm,
This coronet part between you. [*Giving the crown.*

Kent. Royal Lear,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,

Lov'd

Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
And as my patron thought on in my pray'rs——

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from
the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, tho' the fork invade
The region of my heart ; be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad : with better judgment check
This hideous rashness ; with my life I answer,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least.

Lear. Kent, on thy life no more !

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thy foes ; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my fight !

Kent. See better, Lear.

Lear. Now by Apollo——

Kent. Now by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. Oh, vassal ! miscreant !

[Laying his hand on his sword.]

Alb. Cornw. Dear Sir, forbear.

Kent. Kill thy physician, and thy fee bestow
Upon thy rank disease ; revoke thy doom,
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant !

Since thou hast fought to make us break our vow,
 To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
 (Which nor our nature, nor our place, can bear)
 Take thy reward.

Five days we do allot thee for provision,
 To shield thee from disasters of the world;
 And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back
 Upon our kingdom; if, the tenth day following,
 Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
 The moment is thy death: away! by Jupiter,
 This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Why, fare thee well, king, since thou art
 resolv'd.

The gods protect thee, excellent Cordelia,
 That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!
 Now to new climates my old truth I bear;
 Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here. [*Exit.*]

Enter Gloucester, with France and Burgundy, and attendants.

Gloc. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
 Who with this king hast rivall'd for our daughter;
 When she was dear to us, we held her so;
 But now her price is fall'n: Sir, there she stands;
 Will you, with those infirmities she owes,

Un-

Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
 Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
 Take her, or leave her?

Burg. Pardon, royal Sir;

Election makes not up on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, Sir; for, by the pow'r
 that made me,

I tell you all her wealth.—For you, great king,

[to *France.*

I would not from your love make such a stray,
 To match you where I hate.

France. This is most strange.

Cord. I yet beseech your majesty,
 (If, for I want that glib and oily art,
 To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
 I'll do't before I speak) that you make known,
 It is no vicious blot, scandal, or foulness,
 No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
 That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour:
 But ev'n for want of that, for which I'm richer,
 A still solliciting eye, and such a tongue,
 That I am glad I've not; though, not to have it,
 Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou

Hadst not been born, than not have pleas'd me
 better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature,
Which often leaves the history unspoke,
That it intends to do? Fairest Cordelia,
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon;
Be't lawful, I take up what's cast away.
Thy dow'rless daughter, king, thrown to my
 chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France.

Lear. Thou hast her, France; let her be thine,
 for we
Have no such daughter; nor shall ever see
That face of hers again; away!
Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt Lear and Burgundy.*]

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cord. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know what you are,
And, like a sister, am most loth to call
Your faults, as they are nam'd. Love well our
 father,

To your professing bosoms I commit him;
So farewell to you both.

Regan. Prescribe not us our duty.

Gon. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
At fortune's alms.

Cord.

Cord. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning
hides.

Well may you prosper!

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt France and Cord.*

Gon. Sister, it is not little I've to say,
Of what most nearly appertains to us both;
I think, our father will go hence to-night.

Regan. That's certain, and with you; next month
with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is:
the observation I have made of it hath not been
little; he always loved our sister most, and with
what poor judgment he hath now cast her off, ap-
pears too grossly.

Regan. 'Tis the infirmity of his age; yet he hath
ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath
been but rash; then must we look, from his age,
to receive not alone the imperfections of long-in-
grafted condition, but therewithal the unruly way-
wardness, that infirm and cholerick years bring
with them.

Regan. Such unconstant starts are we like to have
from him, as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking

between France and him; pray you, let us hit together: if our father carry authority with such disposition as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Regan. We shall further think of it.

Gon. We must do something; ay, and suddenly.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to a castle belonging to the earl of Gloucester.

Enter Edmund, with a letter.

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound; wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The courtesy of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother? Why *bastard*? wherefore *base*?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as gen'rous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? why brand they us
With *base*? with *baseness*? *bastardy*? *base*, *base*?
Our father's love is to the *bastard* Edmund,
As to th' legitimate Edgar; fine word—*legitimate*—
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the *base*
Shall be th' legitimate—I grow, I prosper;

Now,

Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

To him enter Gloucester.

Gloc. Edmund, how now? what paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord. [*putting up the letter.*]

Gloc. No? what need'd then that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? let me see.

Edm. I beseech you, Sir, pardon me; it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perus'd, I find it not fit for your o'er-looking.

Gloc. Give me the letter, Sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain, or give it: The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Gloc. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an assay, or taste, of my virtue.

Gloc. [*reads.*]

“ This policy and reverence of ages makes the
 “ world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our
 “ fortunes from us, till our oldness cannot relish
 “ them. I begin to find the oppression of aged
 “ tyranny; which sways, not as it hath power,
 “ but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this

" I may speak more, If our father would sleep
 " till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his re-
 " venue for ever, and live the beloved of your
 " brother,

EDGAR."

Sleep till I wake him—you should enjoy half his revenue—My son Edgar! had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? When came this to you? who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there is the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the entrancement of my closet.

Gloc. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Gloc. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; I hope, his heart is not in the contents.

Gloc. Has he never before founded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord. But I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as a ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Gloc. Oh, villain, villain! his very opinion in the

the letter. Abhorred villain! Go, seek him; I'll apprehend him. Abominable villain! where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger.

Gloc. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction: And that, without any further delay than this very evening.

Gloc. He cannot be such a monster.

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Gloc. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him—Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you; frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, Sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Gloc. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us; tho' the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourg'd by the frequent effects. Love cools,
friendship

friendship falls off, brothers divide. In cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd 'twixt son and father. We have seen the best of our time.—Find out this villain, Edmund; and it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully—and the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty. 'Tis strange.

[Exit,

Manet Edmund.

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeits of our own behaviour) we make guilty of our disasters, the sun, the moon and stars; as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treacherous, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition on the charge of a star! I should have been what I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.

To him enter Edgar.

Pat!—he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy;

comedy; my cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam—O, these eclipses portend these divisions!

Edgar. How now, brother Edmund? what serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edgar. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily. When saw you my father last?

Edgar. The night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edgar. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? found you no displeasure in him, by word or countenance?

Edgar. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself, wherein you have offended him: and, at my entreaty, forbear his presence, until some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edgar. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear; I pray you, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you

you to hear my lord speak: pray you, go; if you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edgar. Armed, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; I am no honest man, if there be any good meaning towards you; I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it; pray you, away!

Edgar. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business:

[*Exit Edgar.*]

A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! I see the business.
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit!
All with me's meet, that I can fashion fit. [*Exit*]

Scene, the Duke of Albany's Palace.

Enter Gonerill and Steward.

Gon. My father strike my gentleman?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night, he wrongs me; I'll not endure it:

His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On

On ev'ry trifle. When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say, I am sick,
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

Stew. I understand, and will obey you, madam.

Gen. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question.
If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-ru'd: idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities,
That he hath given away!——
Remember what I've said.

Stew. Very well, madam.

Gen. And let his knights have colder looks
among you: what grows of it, no matter; advise
your fellows so: I'll write straight to my sister to
hold my course: away! [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to an open place before the Palace.

Enter Kent disguis'd.

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
And can my speech diffuse, my good intent
May carry thro' itself to that full issue,
For which I raz'd my likeness. Now, banish'd
Kent,

If

If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Enter Lear, Knights and attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go, get
it ready: how now, what art thou? [*To Kent.*

Kent. A man, Sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? what wouldst
thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to
serve him truly, that will put me in trust; to love
him that is honest; to converse with him that is
wise, and says little; to fight when I cannot chuse,
and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor
as the king.

Lear. If thou be'st as poor for a subject, as he
is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst
thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Whom wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, Sir; but you have that in your coun-
tenance, which I would fain call master.

Lear.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counfels, ride, run, marr a curious tale in telling it, and deliyer a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, Sir, to love a woman for finging; nor so old, to doat on her for any thing. I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me, thou shalt serve me.

Enter Steward.

You, you, firrah, where's my daughter?

Stew. So please you—— *[Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? call the clot-pole back.

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not?

Knight.

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Knight. I beseech you pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent, when I think your highness is wrong'd.

Lear. Thou but remember'st me of my own conception. I have perceiv'd a most faint neglect of late; I will look further into't. Go you and tell my daughter I would speak with her.

Enter Steward.

Oh, you, Sir, come you hither, Sir; who am I, Sir?

Stew. My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father? my lord's knave!

Stew. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, rascal?

[*Striking him.*]

Stew. I'll not be struck, my lord!

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you base foot-ball player.

[*Tripping up his heels.*]

Lear. I thank thee, fellow. Thou serv'st me, and I'll love thee.

Kent.

Kent. Come, Sir, arise, away!

[Pushes the *Servant* out.

To them, enter Gonerill.

Lear. How now, daughter? what makes that frontlet on? you are too much of late i'th' frown.

Gon. Your insolent retinue, Sir,
Do hourly carp and quarrel, breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots.

I thought by making this well known unto you,
I' have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would, you would make use of your good
wisdom,

Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
These dispositions, which of late transport you
From what you rightly are.

Lear. Does any here know me? this is not Lear;
Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? where are his
eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discerning
Are lethargied—Ha! waking?—'tis not so;
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Your name, fair gentleman?

Gon. This admiration, Sir, is much o'th' favour
Of other your new humours. I beseech you
To understand my purposes aright.

You, as you're old and reverend, should be wise.
Here do you keep an hundred knights and squires,
Men so disorder'd, so debauch'd and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shews like a riotous inn. Be then desir'd
By her, that esse will take the thing she begs,
Of fifty to disquantity your train;
And the remainders,

To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses, call my train together.—
Degen'rate viper! I'll not trouble thee;
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd
rabble.
Make servants of their betters.

To them, Enter Albany.

Lear. Woe! that too late repents—Oh, Sir,
are you come?
Is it your will? speak, Sir. Prepare my horses.—

[*To Alb.*

Ingra-

Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou shew'st thee in a child,
Than the sea-monster.

Alb. Pray, Sir, be patient.

Lear. Detested kite! thou liest. [To Gen.]

My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know.

Oh, most small fault!

How ugly didst thou in Cordelia shew!

Which, like an engine, wrenched my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all
love,

And added to the gall. Oh, Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate that let thy folly in,

[Striking his head.]

And thy dear judgment out.—Go, go, my people.

Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes
this?

Gen. Never afflict yourself to know of it;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap?

Alb. What's the matter, Sir?

Lear. I tell thee—life and death! I am ashamed
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;

[To Gen.]

That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,

Should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs
upon thee!

Th'untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! old fond eyes,
Bewep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. No, gorgon, thou shalt find,
That I'll resume the shape, which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever.

Alb. My lord, I'm guiltless, as I'm ignorant,
Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord—
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear a father!
If thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful, change thy purpose;
Into her womb convey sterility,
Dry up in her the organs of increase,
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen, that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her;
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth,
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel,
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
To have a thankless child!—Go, go, my people. [*Exe.*

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE, an apartment in the castle belonging to the earl of Gloucester.

Enter Edmund.

THE duke be here to-night ! the better ! best !
 This weaves itself perforce into my business,
 Which I must act : briefness and fortune, work !
 Brother, a word ; descend ; brother, I say !—

To him, enter Edgar.

My father watches ; oh, Sir, fly this place,
 Intelligence is giv'n where you are hid ;
 You've now the good advantage of the night—
 Have you not spoken 'gainst the duke of Cornwall ?
 He's coming hither now i' th' night, i' th' haste,
 And Regan with him ; have you nothing said
 Upon his party 'gainst the duke of Albany ?
 Advise yourself.

Edgar. I'm sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming. 'Tis not safe

To tarry here. Fly, brother! hence! away.

[*Exit Edgar.*]

Glo'fter approaches.—Now for a feigned fcuffle!
—Yield! come before my father! lights, here,
lights!

Some blood drawn on me, would beget opinion

[*Wounds his arm.*]

Of my more fierce encounter. I've seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport. Father! father!
Stop, stop, no help?—

To him, enter Gloucester and servants with torches.

Gloc. Now, Edmund; where's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark; his sharp sword
out,

Mumbling of wicked charms, conj'ring the moon
To stand's auspicious mistress.

Gloc. But where is he?

Edm. Look, Sir, I bleed.

Gloc. Where is the villain; Edmund?

Edm. Fle'd this way, Sir, when by no means he
could——

Gloc. Pursue him, ho! go after. By no means,
what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lord-
ship;

But

But ~~that~~ I told him, the revenging gods
 'Gainst parricides did all their thunder bend,
 Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
 The child was bound to th' father—Sir, in fine,
 Seeing how lothly opposite I stood
 To his unnat'ral purpose, in fell motion
 With his prepared sword he charges home
 My unprovided body, lanc'd my arm ;
 'Till at length gasted by the noise I made,
 Full suddenly he fled.

Gloc. Let him fly far ;
 Not in this land shall he remain uncaught.
 The noble duke,
 My worthy and arch patron, comes to-night ;
 By his authority I will proclaim it,
 That he, which finds him, shall deserve our thanks ;
 He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
 And threaten'd to discover him ; he replied,
 Thou unpossessing bastard ! dost thou think,
 If I would stand against thee, the reposal
 Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
 Would make thy words faith'd ? no ; I'd turn it all
 To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice.

Gloc. Oh, strange, fasten'd, villain !
 Would he deny his letter ?

All ports I'll bar, the which shall not scape; ^{covered}
 I will fend far and near, that all the kingdoms
 May have due note of him; and of my hand, if one
 (Loyal and natural boy!) I'll work the means ^{to bid}
 To make thee capable. ^[Exeunt.]

Scene, the outside of the earl of Gloucester's castle.

Enter Kent, and Steward, severally.

Stew. Good evening to thee, friend; art of this
 house?

Kent. Ay.

Stew. Where may we fet our horses?

Kent. I th' mire.

Stew. Prithce, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Stew. Why then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would
 make thee care for me.

Stew. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee
 not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Stew. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken
 meats, a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-
 suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-socking
 knave;

knave; willy-diver'd; action-taking brute; a whorson, gins-gazing, superforviccable, finical rogue; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service; and art nothing but the composition of knave, beggar, coward, pander; one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.

Stew. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one, that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!

Kent. What a brazen-fac'd varlet art thou, thus to deny thou know'st me? Is it two days ago, since I tript up thy heels, and beat thee before the king? Draw, you rogue; for though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o'th' moonshine of you; you whorson, cullionly, barber-monger, draw.

[Drawing his sword.

Stew. Away, I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal; you come with letters against the king; and take vanity, the puppet's part, against the royalty of her father; draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks—draw, you rascal, come your ways.

Stew. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand, you neat slave, strike.

[Beating him.

Stew.

Stew. Help ho! murder! murder!—[*Exeunt.*]

Flourish. Enter Cornwall and Regan, attended;
meeting Gloucester and Edmund.

Gloc. You graces are right welcome.

Cornw. How now, my noble friend? since I
came hither,

Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news.

Regan. If it be true, all vengeance comes too
short,

Which can pursue th'offender: How does my lord?

Gloc. Oh, madam, my old heart is crack'd, 'tis
crack'd.

Regan. What, did my father's godson seek your
life?

He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

Gloc. Oh, lady, lady, shame would have it hid.

Regan. Was he not companion with the riotous
knights

That tend upon my father?

Gloc. I know not, madam: 'Tis too bad, too bad.

Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

Regan. No marvel then, tho' he were ill-affected;
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have th'expence and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister

Been

Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.

Cornw. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.

Edmund, I hear, that you have shewn your father
A child-like office.

Edm. 'Twas my duty, Sir.

Gloc. He did reveal his practice, and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Cornw. Is he pursu'd?

Gloc. Ay, my good lord.

Cornw. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm. As for you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need.

Edm. I shall serve you, Sir, truly, however else.

Gloc. I thank your grace.

Regan. Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home: The sev'ral messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our businesses,
Which crave the instant use.

Gloc. I serve you, madam.

Enter

Enter Steward and Kent, with swords drawn.

Glo. Weapons? arms? what's the matter here?

Cornw. Keep peace, upon your lives; he dies, that strikes again; what's the matter?

Regan. The messengers from our sister and the king!

Cornw. What is your difference? speak.

Stew. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestir'd your valour; you cowardly rascal! nature disclaims all share in thee: A tailor made thee.

Cornw. Thou art a strange fellow; a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, Sir; a stone-cutter, or a painter could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours o'th' trade.

Cornw. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Stew. This antient ruffian, Sir, whose life I have spar'd at suit of his grey beard——

Kent. Thou whorson zed! thou unnecessary letter! my lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him. Spare my grey beard? you wagtail!——

Cornw. Peace, sirrah! know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, Sir, but anger hath a privilege.

Cornw.

K I N G L E A R. 141

Cornw. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,

Who wears no honesty: Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords in twain

Too intricate to unloose; sooth every passion,

That in the nature of their lords rebels;

Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;

Forwear, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks

With ev'ry gale and vary of their masters;

As knowing nought, like dogs, but following.

A plague upon your epileptick visage!

Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?

Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,

I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

Cornw. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Gloc. How fell you out? say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy,
Than I and such a knave.

Cornw. Why dost thou call him knave? what is
his fault?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Cornw. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his,
nor hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain;
I have seen better faces in my time,

Than

Than stand on any shoulders that I see
Before me at this instant.

Cornw. This is some fellow,
Who having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A faucy roughness; and constrains the garb,
Quite from his nature. He can't flatter, he,—
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth;
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft, and more corrupt design,
Than twenty silly ducking minions,
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
Under th' allowance of your grand aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phoebus' front—

Cornw. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you dis-
commend so much: I know, Sir, I am no flatterer;
he, that beguil'd you in a plain accent, was a plain
knave; which for my part I will not be, though I
should win your displeasure to intreat me to't.

Cornw. What was th' offence you gave him?

Stew. I never gave him any;
It pleas'd the king his master very lately
To strike at me upon his misconstruction;

When

When he, conjunct, and flatt'ring his displeasure,
 Tript me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
 And put upon him such a deal of man,
 That he got praises of the king,
 For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
 And in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
 Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards,
 But Ajax is their fool.

Cornw. Fetch forth the stocks!
 You stubborn ancient knave, you rav'rend braggart,
 We'll teach you——

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
 Call not your stocks for me; I serve the king;
 On whose employment I was sent to you.
 You shall do small respect, shew too bold malice
 Against the grace and person of my master,
 Stocking his messenger.

Cornw. Fetch forth the stocks;
 As I have life and honour, there shall he sit'till noon.

Regan. 'Till noon! 'till night, my lord, and all
 night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
 You could not use me so.

Regan. Sir, being his knave, I will.

[Stocks brought out.]

Cornw.

Cornw. This is a fellow of the self-same nature
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks.

Gloc. Let me beseech your grace not to do so;
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for it; but must take it ill
To be thus slighted in his messenger.

Cornw. I'll answer that.

Regan. My sister may receive it worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted.

[*Kent is put in the stocks.*]

Come, my lord, away. [*Exeunt Regan and Cornw.*]

Gloc. I'm sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's
pleasure,

Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be check'd nor stop'd. I'll intreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, Sir; I've watch'd and tra-
vell'd hard;

Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle:
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels;
Give you good morrow.

Gloc. The duke's to blame in this, 'twill be ill
taken. [*Exit.*]

Kent. Approach, thou beacon to this under-
globe, [*Looking up to the moon.*]

That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter. I know, 'tis from Cordelia;

Who

Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
 Of my obscure course. All weary and o'er-watch'd,
 Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
 This shameful lodging.
 Fortune, good night! smile once more, turn thy
 wheel! [Sleeps.]

Scene changes to a part of a heath.

Enter Edgar.

Edgar. I've heard myself proclaim'd;
 And, by the happy hollow of a tree,
 Escap'd the hurt. No port is free, no place,
 That guard and most unusual vigilance
 Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,
 I will preserve myself: And am bethought
 To take the basest and the poorest shape,
 That ever penury in contempt of man
 Brought near to beast: My face I will besmear,
 Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
 And out-face
 The winds, and persecutions of the sky.
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
 Pins, iron-spikes, thorns, sprigs of rosemary;

And thus from sheep-cotes, villages, and mills,
 Enforce their charity; poor Turlygood! poor Tom!
 That's something yet: Edgar, I nothing am. [*Exit.*]

Scene changes again, to the earl of Gloucester's castle.

Kent in the stocks. Enter Lear and attendants.

Lear. 'Tis strange, that they should so depart
 from home,

And not send back my messenger.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!

Lear. Ha! mak'st thou thy shame thy pastime?

Kent. No, my lord.

Lear. What's he, that hath so much thy place
 mistook,

To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she,

Your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.

Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.

Lear. They durst not do't.

They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than
 murder,

To

To do upon respect such violent outrage :
 Resolve me with all modest haste, which way
 Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,
 Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, while at their home
 I did commend your highness' letters to them,
 Came a reeking post,
 Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
 From Gonerill his mistress, salutation ;
 Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
 Which presently they read : On whose contents
 They summon'd up their train, and straight took
 horse,

Commanding me to follow and attend
 The leisure of their answer ; gave me cold looks :
 And meeting here the other messenger,
 Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine ;
 (Being the very fellow, which of late
 Display'd so faucily against your highness)
 Having more man than wit about me, I drew ;
 He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries :
 Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
 The shame which here it suffers.

Lear. Oh, how this mother swells up tow'rd my
 heart !

Down, down, thou climbing sorrow !

Thy element's below. Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, Sir, here within.

Enter Gloucester.

Lear. Now, Glo'ster?—[*Gloc. whispers Lear.*]—

Ha! how's this?

Deny to speak with me? they're sick, they're weary,
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches,
The images of revolt and flying off.

Bring me a better answer!

Gloc. My dear lord,

You know the fiery quality of the duke——

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—

Fiery? what quality? why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall, and his wife.

Gloc. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them? dost thou understand me,
man?

Gloc. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall;
the dear father

Would with his daughter speak; commands her
service:

Are they inform'd of this?—My breath and
blood!——

Fiery? the fiery duke? tell the hot duke, that—

No,

No, but not yet; may be, he is not well;
 Infirmary doth still neglect all office,
 Whereto our health is bound. I will forbear,
 Nor task the indispos'd and sickly fit
 As the sound man.—Death on my state! but
 wherefore

Should he sit here? This act persuades me,
 That this remotion of the duke and her
 Is practice only. Give me my servant forth;
 Go, tell the duke and's wife, I'd speak with them:
 Now, presently,—bid them come forth and hear me,
 Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum,
 'Till it cry, sleep to death.—Oh! are you come?

Enter Cornwall, Regan, and servants.

Cornw. Hail to your grace!

[Kent is set at liberty.]

Lear. Good morrow both!

Oh me, my heart! my rising heart! but down!

Regan. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what
 cause

I have to think so; if thou wert not glad,
 I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
 Sepulchring an adultress. Beloved Regan,
 Thy sister's naught: Oh, Regan, she hath tied

Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture here;
I can scarce speak to thee; thou'lt not believe,
With how deprav'd a quality—oh, Regan!

Regan. I pray you, Sir, take patience; I have
hope,

You less know how to value her desert,
Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say? how is that?

Regan. I cannot think, my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation. If, perchance,
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers;
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Regan. Oh, Sir, you are old! you should be rul'd
and led

By some discretion! therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say, you have wrong'd her, Sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness?

Do you but mark, how this becometh us?

“Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;

“Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg,

“That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.”

Regan. Good Sir, no more; these are unsightly
humours.

Return

Return you to my sister.

Lear. Never, Regan :

She hath abated me of half my train ;
 Look'd blank upon me ; struck me with her tongue
 Most serpent-like, upon the very heart.

All the stor'd vengeance of Heaven fall
 On her ungrateful top!

Regan. Oh, the blest gods!

So will you wish on me, when the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my
 curse :

Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
 Thee o'er to harshness. 'Tis not in thee
 To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
 To bandy hasty words. Thou better know'st
 The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
 Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude :
 Thy half o'th' kingdom thou hast not forgot,
 Wherein I thee endow'd.

Regan. Good Sir, to th' purpose. [*Trumpet within.*]

Lear. Who put my man i'th' stocks?

Enter Steward.

Cornw. What trumpet's that?

Regan. I know't, my sister's : this approves her
 letter,

L 4

That

That she would soon be here. Is your lady come?

Lear. Out, varlet, from my sight!

Cornw. What means your grace?

Enter Gonerill.

Lear. Who stook'd my servant? Regan, I've
good hope,

Thou didst not know on't.—Who comes here?

Oh, Heav'ns,

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway

Hallow obedience, if yourselves are old,

Make it your cause; send down and take my part!

Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?

Oh, Regan, will you take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by th'hand, Sir? how have I
offended?

All's not offence, that indiscretion finds,

And dotage terms so.

Lear. Oh, fides, you are too tough!

Will you yet hold?—How came my man with' stocks?

Cornw. I set him there, Sir; but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You? did you?

Regan. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so,

If, 'till the expiration of your month,

You will return and sojourn with my sister,

Dismissing

Dismiss'ing half your train, come then to me!
 I'm now from home, and out of that provision
 Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her? and fifty men dismiss'd?
 No; rather I abjure all roofs, and chuse
 To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,
 Than have my smallest wants supplied by her.

Gon. At your choice, Sir.

Lear. I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad!
 I will not trouble thee, my child. Farewell!
 We'll no more meet, no more see one another.
 Let shame come when it will, I do not call it;
 I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
 Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
 Mend when thou canst; be better, at thy leisure.
 I can be patient, I can stay with Regan;
 I and my hundred knights.

Regan. Not altogether so:
 I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
 For your fit welcome.

Lear. Is this well spoken?

Regan. I dare avouch it, Sir: what, fifty followers!
 Is it not well? what should you need of more?
 Yea, or so many? since both charge and danger
 Speak 'gainst so great a number: how in one house
 Should many people under two commands

Hold

Hold amity? 'Tis hard, almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance

From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

Regan. Why not, my lord? if then they chanc'd to slack ye,

We could controul them. If you'll come to me, (For now I spy a danger) I entreat you To bring but five-and-twenty; to no more Will I give place or notice.

Lear. I gave you all!

Regan. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Oh, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet Heav'n!

Keep me in temper! I would not be mad!

Gon. Hear me, my lord;

What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five, To follow in a house, where twice so many Have a command to tend you?

Regan. What needs one?

Lear. Oh, reason not the need: our basest beggars Are in the poorest things superfluous; Allow not nature more than nature needs, Man's life is cheap as beasts. But for true need, You Heav'ns, give me that patience which I need! You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,

As

As full of grief as years; wretched in both;
 If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
 Against their father, fool me not so much
 To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger;
 Oh, let not womens' weapons, water-drops,
 Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnat'ral hags,
 I will have such revenges on you both,
 That all the world shall—I will do such things—
 What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
 The terrors of the earth! you think, I'll weep;
 No, I'll not weep. I have full cause of weeping:
 This heart shall break into a thousand flaws,
 Or ere I weep. Oh, gods, I shall go mad! [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

SCENE, *a heath. Storm.*

Enter Lear and Kent.

Lear.

BLOW winds, and crack your cheeks; rage,
 blow!

You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout
 'Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the
 cocks!

You

You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,
 Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
 Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking
 thunder,

Strike flat the thick rotundity o'th' world;
 Crack nature's mould, all germins spill at once
 That make ungrateful man!

Kent. Not all my best entreaties can persuade him
 Into some needful shelter, or to 'bide
 This poor flight cov'ring on his aged head,
 Expos'd to this wild war of earth and Heav'n.

[*Thunder.*

Lear. Rumble thy belly full, spit fire, spout rain;
 Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
 I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
 I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children;
 You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
 Your horrible pleasure;—here I stand your slave;
 A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man!
 But yet I call you servile ministers,
 That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
 Your high-engender'd battles, 'gainst a head
 So old and white as this. Oh! oh! 'tis foul.

Kent. Hard by, Sir, is a hovel that will lend
 Some shelter from this tempest.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience:
 I will say nothing.

Kent.

Kent. Alas, Sir! things that love night,
 Love not such nights as these : the wrathful skies
 Gallow the very wand'ers of the dark,
 And make them keep their caves : since I was man,
 Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
 Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
 Remember to have heard.

Lear. Let the great gods,
 That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
 Find out their enemies now! Tremble, thou wretch,
 That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
 Unwhipt of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand;
 Thou perjure, and thou simular of virtue,
 That art incestuous! caitiff, shake to pieces,
 That under covert and convenient seeming,
 Hast practis'd on man's life!—Close pent-up guilts,
 Rive your concealing continents, and ask
 These dreadful summoners grace!—I am a man,
 More sinn'd against, than sinning.

Kent. Good Sir, to the hovel!

Lear. My wits begin to turn.
 Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy? art cold?
 I'm cold myself. Where is the straw, my fellow?
 The art of our necessities is strange,
 That can make vile things precious. Come, your
 hovel!

Alack!

For lifting food to't?—But I'll punish home:
 No, I will weep no more—In such a night,
 To shut me out?—Pour on, I will endure:
 In such a night as this? Oh, Regan, Gonerill,
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all!—
 Oh, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
 No more of that!—

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Pr'ythee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease;
 This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
 On things would hurt me more—but I'll go in;
 In, boy, go first. You houseless poverty—
 Nay, get thee in; I'll pray, and then I'll sleep—
 Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!
 How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
 Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
 From seasons such as these?—Oh, I have ta'en
 Too little care of this! Take physick, pomp;
 Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
 That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
 And shew the Heav'ns more just!

Edgar [within]. Fathom and half, fathom and
 half! poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou, that dost grumble there
 i'th' straw? Come forth.

Enter

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Enter Edgar, disguised like a madman.

Edgar. Away! the foul fiend follows me. Thro' the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind. Humph, go to thy bed and warm thee.

Lear. Didst thou give all to thy daughters? and art thou come to this?

Edgar. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge, made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting horse, over four-inch'd bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor,—bless thy five wits; Tom's a-cold. O do, de, do, de, do, de ——— [*shivering.*] bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking; do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. There could I have him now, and there, and here again, and there.

[*Storm still.*]

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?

Couldst thou save nothing? didst thou give 'em all? Now all the plagues, that in the pendulous air Hang fated o'er mens' faults, light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, Sir.

Lear. Death! traitor, nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.

Edgar. Pillicock sat on pillicock-hill, alow, alow,
loo, loo!

Lear. Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edgar. Take heed o' th' foul fiend; obey thy
parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit
not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet
heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edgar. A serving-man, proud in heart, that
curl'd my hair, wore gloves in my cap, serv'd the lust
of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness
with her: swore as many oaths as I spoke words,
and broke them in the sweet face of Heav'n. False
of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand, hog in sloth,
fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness,
lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor
the rustling of silk betray thy poor heart to women.
Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of
plackets, thy pen from lender's book, and defy the
foul fiend! Still through the hawthorn blows the
cold wind.

[*Storm still.*

Lear.

Lear. Thou wert better in thy grave, than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? consider him well. Thou, ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the shēep no wool, the cat no perfume. Aha! here's two of us are sophisticated. Thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come, unbutton here.

[*Tearing off his cloaths.*]

Kent. Defend his wits, good Heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot; what is your name?

Edgar. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the wall-newt and the water-newt; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats crowdung for fallads, swallows the old rat, and the ditch-dog; that drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; that's whipt from tything to tything; that has three suits to his back, six shirts to his body,

Horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But rats and mice, and such small deer,

Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Fraterreto calls me, and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darknes. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Lear. Right, ba! ha! was it not pleasant to

white wheat, and hurts the poor creatures of the earth.

Swithin footed thrice the wold *.
 He met the night-mare and her ninefold,
 'Twas there he did appoint her;
 He bid her alight, and her troth plight,
 And aroynt the witch, aroynt her.

Enter Gloucester.

Lear. What's he?

Gloc. What, has your grace no better company?

Edgar. The prince of darkness is a gentleman;
 Modo he is call'd, and Mahu.

Gloc. Go with me, Sir; hard by I have a tenant.
 My duty cannot suffer me
 To obey in all your daughters' hard commands,
 Who have enjoin'd me to make fast my doors,
 And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you.
 Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
 And bring you where both fire and food are ready.

* Swithin footed thrice the WOLD.] I was surpris'd to see in the Appendix to the last edition of Shakespear, that my reading of this passage was "Swithin footed thrice the WORLD." I have ever been averse to capricious variations of the old text; and in the present instance the rhyme, as well as the sense, would have induced me to abide by it. WORLD was a mere error of the press. WOLD is a word still in use in the North of England; signifying a kind of Down near the sea. A large tract of country in the East-Riding of Yorkshire is called the WOULDs.

166 K I N G L E A R.

Kent. Good my lord, take this offer.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher;
What is the cause of thunder?

Gloc. Beseech you, Sir, to go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned
Theban. What is your study?

Edgar. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill
vermin,

Lear. Let me ask you a word in private.

Kent. His wits are quite unsettled; good Sir,
let's force him hence.

Gloc. Canst blame him? his daughters seek his
death; this bedlam but disturbs him the more.
Fellow, be gone.

Edgar. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man—— [Exit.

Gloc. Now, prithee, friend, let us take him in
our arms, and carry him where he shall find both
welcome and protection. Good Sir, along with us!

Lear. You say right. Let them anatomize Re-
gan! See what breeds about her heart! Is there
any cause in nature for these hard hearts?

Kent. I do beseech your grace.

Lear. Hift!—make no noise! make no noise!
—so, so! we'll to supper in the morning. [Exeunt.

Scene

Scene changes to Gloucester's Palace.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gonerill, Edmund, and Attendants.

Cornw. I'll have revenge ere I depart this house.
Regan, see here! a plot upon our state;
 'Tis Glo'ster's character; he has betray'd
 His double trust, of subject and of host.

Regan. Then double be our vengeance!

Edm. Oh, that this treason had not been, or I
 Not the discoverer!

Cornw. Edmund, thou shalt find
 A dearer father in our love. Henceforth
 We call thee earl of Glo'ster.

Edm. I am much bounden to your grace, and
 will persevere in my loyalty, tho' the conflict be
 fore between that and my blood.

Cornw. Our dear sister Gonerill, do you post
 speedily to my lord your husband; shew him this
 letter: The army of France is landed; seek out
 the traitor Glo'ster.

Regan. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Cornw. Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund,
 keep you our sister company; the revenges we
 are bound to take upon your father, are not fit for
 your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are

going, to a most hasty preparation; we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift, and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister; farewell, my lord of Glo'ster.

Enter Steward.

How now? where's the King?

Stew. My lord of Glo'ster has convey'd him hence, Some five or six-and-thirty of his knights Are gone with him tow'rd Dover! where they boast To have well-armed friends.

Cornw. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord and sister.

[Exeunt Gon. and Edm.]

Cornw. Edmund, farewell.—Go seek the traitor Glo'ster!

Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us: Though well we may not pass upon his life Without the form of justice; yet our pow'r Shall do a court'sy to our wrath, which men May blame, but not controul.

Enter Gloucester, brought in by Servants.

Who's there? the traitor?

Regan. 'Tis he. Thank Heaven, he's ta'en

Cornw. Bind fast his arms.

Gloc. What mean your graces?

You are my guests. Do me no foul play, friends,

Cornw. Bind him, I say. *[They bind him.]*

Regan,

Regan. Hard, hard: Oh, traitor! thou shalt find—

Cornw. Come, Sir, what letters had you late
from France?

And what confed'racy have you with the traitors,
Late footed in the kingdom?

Regan. To whose hands

Have you sent the lunatick king? speak.

Cornw. Where hast thou sent the king?

Gloc. To Dover.

Regan. Wherefore to Dover?

Wast thou not charg'd, at peril—

Cornw. Wherefore to Dover? let him first answer
that.

Gloc. I am tied to th' stake, and I must stand the
course.

Regan. Wherefore to Dover?

Gloc. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes, nor thy fierce sister
Carve his anointed flesh; but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Cornw. See't thou shalt never; slaves, perform
your work;

Out with those treacherous eyes; dispatch, I say!

[*Exeunt Gloc. and Serv.*]

If thou see'st vengeance—

Gloc. [*without*] He that will think to live 'till he
be old

Give

Give me some help.—Oh, cruel! oh! ye gods.

Serv. Hold, hold, my lord! I bar your cruelty;
I cannot love your safety, and give way
To such a barbarous practice.

Cornw. Ah, my villain!

Serv. I have been your servant from my infancy,
But better service have I never done you
Than with this boldness——

Cornw. Take thy death, slave.

Serv. Nay then, revenge! [*Fight.*

Regan. Help here! are you not hurt, my lord?

Re-enter Gloucester and Servants.

Gloc. All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son
Edmund?

Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature
To quit this horrid act.

Regan. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: It was he
That broach'd thy treasons to us.

Gloc. Oh, my follies!
Then Edgar was abus'd. Kind gods, forgive
Me that, and prosper him!

Regan. Go, thrust him out
At gates, and let him smell his way to Dover.

[*Exeunt with Gloc.*

How

How is't, my lord? how look you?

Cornw. I have receiv'd a hurt: follow me, lady.—
Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace.
Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.
[*Exit, led by Regan.*]

A C T IV.

SCENE, *an open Country.*

Enter Edgar.

Edgar.

YET better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be
worst,

The lowest, most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance; lives not in fear.
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to comfort.

Enter Gloucester, led by an Old Man.

Who comes here?

My father poorly led? World, world! oh, world!
But that thy strange mutations make us wait thee,
Life

Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. Oh, my good lord, I have been your
tenant,

And your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Gloc. Away, get thee away: good friend, be gone;
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.

Gloc. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes:
I stumbled when I saw. Oh, dear son Edgar,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say, I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now? who's there?

Edgar. Oh, gods; who is't can say, I'm at the worst?
I'm worse, than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Gloc. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman, and beggar too.

Gloc. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I th' last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man, a worm. My son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him. I've heard more
since.

As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods;
They kill us for their sport.

Edgar.

Edgar. Alas, he's sensible that I was wrong'd,
 And should I own myself, his tender heart
 Would break betwixt extremes of grief and joy.
 Bad is the trade must play the fool to sorrow,
 Ang'ring itself and others.—Bless thee, master!

Gloc. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Gloc. Get thee away: If, for my sake,
 Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or twain
 T' th' way tow'rd Dover, do it for ancient love;
 And bring some covering for this naked wretch,
 Whom I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, Sir, he is mad.

Gloc. 'Tis the time's plague when madmen lead
 the blind:

Do as I bid, or rather do thy pleasure;
 Above the rest, begone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best' parrel that I have,
 Come on't what will. [Exit.

Gloc. Sirrah, naked fellow!

Edgar. Poor Tom's a-cold.—I cannot fool it
 further.

Gloc. Come hither, fellow.

Edgar. And yet I must!—

Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Gloc. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edgar.

Edgar. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scar'd out of his good wits. Bless thee, good man, from the foul fiend.

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the Heavens' plagues

Have humbled to all strokes. That I am wretched, Makes thee the happier: Heavens deal so still.

Dost thou know Dover?

Edgar. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head Looks fearfully on the confined deep:

Bring me but to the very brink of it,

And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear,

With something rich about me: from that place

I shall no leading need.

Edgar. Give me thy arm:

Poor Tom shall lead thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene, the Duke of Albany's palace.

Enter Gonerill and Edmund.

Gon. Welcome, my lord. I marvel, our mild husband

Not met us on the way.

Enter Steward.

Now, where's your master?

Stew.

Stew. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd:
 I told him of the army that was landed;
 He smil'd at it. I told him you were coming;
 His answer was, The worse. Of Glo'ster's treachery,
 And of the loyal service of his son,
 When I inform'd him, then he call'd me Sot.
 What most he should dislike, seems pleasant to him;
 What like, offensive.

Gon. Then shall you go no further. [*To Edm.*
 It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
 That dares not undertake. Back, Edmund, to my
 brother;
 Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers.
 I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
 Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
 Shall pass between us: You ere long shall hear,
 If you dare venture on your own behalf,
 A mistress's command. Conceive, and fare thee
 well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Glo'ster! [*Exit Edm.*
 Oh, the strange difference of man and man!
 To thee a woman's services are due,
 My fool usurps my duty.

Stew. Madam, here comes my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter

Enter Albany.

Alb. Oh, Gonerill, what have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father and a gracious aged man,
Most barb'rous, most degen'rate, have you madded.
How could my brother suffer you to do it,
A man, a prince by him so benefited?

Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
Whilst thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest,
"Alack! why does he so?"——

Alb. Thou chang'd, and self-converted thing!
for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature.

Enter Messengers.

Mess. Oh, my good lord, the duke of Cornwall's
dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The earl of Glo'ster's eyes.

Alb. Glo'ster's eyes!

Mess. A servant, that he bred, thrill'd with
remorse,
Oppos'd the horrid act; bending his sword
Against

Against his master: Who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead:
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shews You are above,
You Justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can 'venge! But oh, poor Glo'ster!
Where was his son when they did take his eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He's not here.

Mess. No, my good lord; he is return'd again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd
against him,

And quit the house of purpose, that their punish-
ment

Might have the freer course.

Alb. Glo'ster, I live

To thank thee for the love thou shew'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes. Come hither, friend,
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Going, returns.*]
See thyself, Gonerill!

Proper deformity shews not in the fiend,

So horrid as in woman. [*Exe. Alb. and Mess.*]

Gon. Oh, vain fool!

That hast not in thy brows an eye discerning

Thine honour from thy suffering!

Enter Steward, with a letter.

Stew. This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer:
'Tis from your sifter. Cornwall being dead,
His loss your sifter has in part supplied,
Making earl Edmund general of her forces.

Gon. One way I like this well:
But being widow, and my Glo'ster with her,
May pluck down all the building of my love.
I'll read, and answer these dispatches straight.
It was great ign'rance, Glo'ster's eyes being out,
To let him live. Add speed unto your journey,
And if you chance to meet that old blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene, Dover.

Enter Kent and a Gentleman.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any
demonstration of grief?

Gent. Yes, Sir; she took 'em, read 'em in my
presence;

And now and then a big round tear ran down
Her delicate cheek: Much mov'd, but not to rage,
Patience with sorrow strove. Her smiles and tears
Were like a wetter May.

Kent.

Kent. Spoke you with her since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Well, Sir; the poor distressed Lear's in town;

Who sometimes, in his better tune remembers
What we are come about; and by no means
Will yield to see Cordelia.

Gent. Why, good Sir?

Kent. A sov'reign shame so bows him; his un-
kindness,

That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters; these things sting
him

So venomously, that burning shame detains him
From his dear daughter.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's pow'rs you
heard?

Gent. 'Tis so, they are afoot.

Kent. Well, Sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him. Some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile:
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. Pray, along with
me.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, a camp.

Enter Cordelia, Physician, and Soldiers.

Cord. Alack, 'tis he! why, he was met ev'n now
As mad as the vex'd sea, singing aloud,
Crowned with flowers, and all the weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.—Their poor old father!
Oh, sisters, sisters! shame of ladies! sisters!
Ha, Regan, Gonerill! what! i'th' storm? i'th' night?
Let pity ne'er believe it! oh, my heart!

Phys. Take comfort, madam; there are means
to cure him.

Cord. No, 'tis too probable the furious storm
Has pierc'd his tender body past all cure;
And the bleak winds, cold rain, and sulph'rous
light'ning,
Unsettled his care-wearied mind for ever.
Send forth a cent'ry, bring him to our eye;
Try all the art of man, all med'cine's power,
For the restoring his bereaved sense!
He that helps him, take all!

Phys. Be patient, madam:
Our foster nurse of Nature is repose,
The which he lacks: that to provoke in him
Are many lenient simples, which have power
To close the eye of anguish.

Cord.

Cord. All blest secrets,
 All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
 Spring with my tears; be aidant and remediate
 In the good man's distress! seek, seek for him;
 Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve his life.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

If it be so, one only boon I beg;
 That you'd convey me to his breathless trunk,
 With my own hands to close a father's eyes,
 With show'rs of tears to wash his clay-cold cheeks,
 Then o'er his limbs, with one heart-rending
 sigh,
 To breathe my spirit out, and die beside him.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam:
 The British pow'rs are marching hitherward.

Cord. 'Tis known before. Our preparation
 stands
 In expectation of them. Oh, dear father,
 It is thy business that I go about: therefore, great
 France
 My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
 No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
 But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right.

[*Exeunt.*

N 3

Scene,

Scene, the country near Dover.

Enter Gloucester, and Edgar as a peasant.

Gloc. When shall I come to th' top of that same hill?

Edgar. You do climb up it now. Mark, how we labour.

Gloc. Methinks, the ground is even.

Edgar. Horrible steep.

Hark, do you hear the sea?

Gloc. No, truly.

Edgar. Why then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish,

Gloc. So may it be, indeed.

Methinks, thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edgar. You're much deceiv'd: In nothing am I
chang'd,

But in my garments.

Gloc. Sure, you're better spoken,

Edgar. Come on, Sir; here's the place—stand
still. How fearful

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!

The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Shew scarce so gross as beetles. Half way down

Hangs one that gathers samphire; dreadful trade!

Methinks,

Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head.
 The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
 Appear like mice; and yon tall anchoring bark,
 Diminish'd to her cock; her cock! a buoy
 Almost too small for fight. The murmuring surge
 Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
 Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
 Topple down headlong.

Gloc. Set me where you stand.

Edgar. Give me your hand: You're now within
 a foot

Of th' extreme verge: For all below the moon
 Would I not now leap forward.

Gloc. Let go my hand:

Here, friend, 's another purse, in it a jewel
 Well worth a poor man's taking. May the gods
 Prosper it with thee! Go thou further off;
 Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edgar. Now fare you well, good Sir. [*Seems to go.*]
 I trifle thus with his despair to cure it.

Gloc. Oh, you mighty gods!

This world I do renounce; and in your fights
 Shake patiently my great affliction off:
 If I could bear it longer, and not fall
 To quarrel with your great oppofelefs wills,
 My snuff and latter part of nature should
 Burn itself out. If Edgar live, oh, bless him!

Enter Lear, drest madly with flowers.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining ;
I am the king himself.

Gloc. Ha! who comes here ?

Edgar. Oh, thou side-piercing sight !

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. There's
your press-money, That fellow handles his bow
like a crow-keeper: Draw me a clothier's yard.
Look, look, a mouse! peace, peace;—there's my
gauntlet, I'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the
brown bills. Oh, well flown barb! i'th' clout,
i'th' clout; hewgh!—give the word,

Edgar. Sweet marjoram,

Lear. Pass!

Gloc. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Gonerill! ha! Regan! they flatter'd
me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs in
my beard ere the black ones were there. To say
ay, and no, to every thing that I said.—Ay, and
no too, was no good divinity. When the rain came
to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter;
when the thunder would not peace at my bidding:
there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out! Go to,
they are not men o' their words; they told me, I
was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

Gloc. The trick of that voice I do well remember ;
Is't not the king ?

Lear,

Lear. Ay, every inch a king.

When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.

I pardon that man's life. What was the cause?

Adultery? thou shalt not die; die for adultery? no;

To't, luxury, pell mell; for I lack soldiers.

Gloc. Not all my sorrows past so deep have
touch'd me

As these sad accents. Sight were now a torment.

Lear. Behold yon simpering dame, whose face
presages snow; that minces virtue, and does shake
the head to hear of pleasure's name! The fitchew,
nor the pampered steed, goes to it with a more
riotous appetite; down from the waist they are
centaurs, tho' women all above: But to the girdle
do the gods inherit, beneath is all the fiends'.
There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphur-
ous pit; fy, fy, fy; pah, pah; an ounce of civet,
good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination!
there's money for thee.

Gloc. Oh, let me kiss that hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it first, it smells of mortality.

Gloc. Oh, ruin'd piece of nature!

Lear. Arraign her first! 'tis Gonerill. I here
take my oath before this honourable assembly, she
struck the poor king her father.

Gloc. Patience, good Sir!

Lear.

Lear. And here's another, whose warpt looks
proclaim

What store her heart is made of.—Stop her there!
Arms, arms! sword, fire!—Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her scape!

Gloc. Oh, pity, Sir! where is the firmness now
That you so oft have boasted?—Do you know me?

Lear. I do remember thine eyes well enough!
do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love. Read
thou this challenge, mark but the penning of it.

Gloc. Were all the letters funs, I could not see
one.

Edgar. I would not take this from report; it is,
And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Gloc. What, with this case of eyes?

Lear. Oh, oh, are you there with me? no eyes
in your head, nor no money in your purse? yet
you see how this world goes.

Gloc. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? a man may see how this
world goes, with no eyes. Look with thine ears:
see, how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief.
Hark in thine ear: Change places, and handy-
dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?
Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Gloc.

Gloc. Ay, Sir.

Lear. And the beggar run from the cur? there thou might'st behold the great image of authority; a dog's obey'd in office.—

Thou rascal-beadle, hold thy bloody hand:

Why dost thou lash that whore? strip thy own back;

Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind,

For which thou whip'st her. Th' usurer hangs the
cozener.

Through tatter'd weeds small vices do appear;

Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate fins with gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;

Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.

Get thee glass eyes,

And, like a scurvy politician, seem

To see the things thou dost not.

Now, now, now, now. Pull off my boots: Harder,
harder, so.

Edgar. Oh, matter and impertinency mix'd,
Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my
eyes.

I know thee well enough, thy name is Glo'ster;

Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:

Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,

We waule and cry. I will preach to thee; mark—

Gloc.

Gloc. Alack, alack the day!

Lear. When we are born, we cry, that we are
come

To this great stage of fools.—

Enter a Gentleman, with attendants.

Gent. Oh, here he is, lay hand upon him; Sir,
Your most dear daughter—

Lear. No rescue? what, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune. Use me well,
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons;
I am cut to th' brain.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds? all myself? I will die bravely,
Like a smug bridegroom. What? I will be jovial.
Come, come, I am a king, my masters; know
you that?

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in't.

It were an excellent stratagem to shoe a troop of
horse with felt: I'll put it in proof—no noise! no
noise! now will we steal upon these sons-in-law;
and then—kill, kill, kill, kill! [*Exit with Gent.*

Gloc. The king is mad. How stiff is my vile sense
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract,

And

And woe, by wrong imaginations, lose
 The knowledge of itself.—Ye gentle gods,
 Take my breath from me! let not misery
 Tempt me again to die before you please.

Edgar. Well pray you, father.

Gloc. Now, good Sir, what are you?

Edgar. A most poor man, made tame to for-
 tune's blows,

Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
 Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
 I'll lead you to some bidding.

Gloc. Hearty thanks!

Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim'd prize! most happy!
 That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh,
 To raise my fortunes. Old, unhappy traitor,
 The sword is out, that must destroy thee.

Gloc. Let thy friendly hand put strength enough
 to't.

Stew. Wherefore, bold peasant,
 Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor! hence,
 Lest I destroy thee too. Let go his arm.

Edgar. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther
 'casion.

Stew. Let go, slave, or thou die'st.

Edgar.

Edgar. Good gentleman, go your gate, and let poor volk pass: And 'chud ha' been zwagger'd out of my life, 'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, or i'fe try whether your costard or my bat be the harder. [Fight.]

Stew. Out, dunghill! [*Edgar knocks him down.*
Slave, thou hast slain me; oh, untimely death!—
[Dies.]

Edgar. I know thee well, a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As badness would desire.

Gloc. What, is he dead?

Edgar. Sit you down, Sir.
This is a letter-carrier, and may have
Some papers of intelligence—what's here?

“ To Edmund, earl of Glo'ster. [Reading.]

“ Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You
“ have many opportunities to cut him off; if he
“ return the conqueror, then am I the prisoner,
“ and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth
“ whereof deliver me, and supply the place for
“ your labour.

“ Your (wife, so I would say)

“ affectionate servant,

“ GONERILL.”

Oh,

Oh, undistinguish'd space of woman's will !
 A plot upon her virtuous husband's life,
 And the exchange my brother. Here, i'th'fands
 Thee I'll rake up, the post un sanctified
 Of murd'rous lechers : and in the mature time,
 With this ungracious paper strike the sight
 Of the death-practis'd duke. Give me your hand :
 Come, Sir, I will bestow you with a friend. [*Exe.*

A C T V.

SCENE, a chamber.

Lear asleep on a couch, Cordelia, and attendants.

Cordelia.

OH, ye kind gods !
 Cure this great breach in his abused nature !
 Th'untun'd and jarring senses, oh, wind up
 Of this child-changed father !

Phys. Be by, good madam, when we do awake
 him ;

I doubt not of his temperance.

Cord. Oh, my dear father ! Restauration, hang
 Thy

Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

Phys. Kind and dearest princess!

Cord. Oh, Regan! Gonerill, inhuman sisters!
Had he not been your father, these white flakes
Did challenge pity of you. Was this a face
To be expos'd against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep, dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning?—My very enemy's dog,
Tho' he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire: and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!

'Tis wonder, that thy life and wits, at once,
Had not concluded all.—He wakes; speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

Cord. How does my royal lord? How fares your
majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o'th' graves:
Ha! is this too a world of cruelty?
I know my privilege; think not that I will
Be treated like a wretched mortal! No.
No more of that!

Cord. Speak to me, Sir; who am I?

Lear.

Lear. Thou art a foul in blifs ; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cord. Sit, do you know me ?

Lear. You're a spirit, I know ; when did you die ?

Cord. Still, still, far wide !

Phyf. He's scarce awake : he'll soon grow more
compos'd.

Lear. Where have I been ? where am I ? fair
day-light ?

I'm mightily abus'd ; I should even die with pity,
To see another thus. I know not what to say ;
I will not swear these are my hands :
'Would I were assur'd of my condition !

Cord. Oh, look upon me, Sir,
And hold your hand in benediction o'er me.
Nay, Sir, you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray do not mock me ;
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward ; and to deal plainly,
I fear, I am not in my perfect mind.

Cord. Ah, then farewell to patience ! witness
for me,
Ye mighty pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd till now !

Lear. Methinks, I should know you, and know
this man.

Yet I am doubtful: for I'm mainly ignorant
 What place this is; and all the skill I have
 Remembers not these garments: nay, I know not
 Where I did sleep last night. Do not laugh at me,
 For, as I am a man, I think this lady
 To be my child Cordelia.

Cord. Oh, my dear, dear father!

Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, faith; pray do
 not weep.

I know I have giv'n thee cause, and am so humbled
 With crosses since, that I could ask
 Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
 That thou couldst grant it;
 If thou hast poison for me I will drink it,
 Bless thee, and die.

Cord. Oh, pity, Sir, a bleeding heart, and cease
 This killing language.

Lear. Tell me, friends, where am I?

Phys. In your own kingdom, Sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam, for the violence
 Of his distemper's past; we'll lead him in,
 Nor trouble him, 'till he is better settled.
 Will't please you, Sir, walk into freer air?

Lear. You must bear with me; pray you now,
 Forget and forgive! I am old and foolish.

[*They lead him off.*

Cord.

Cord. The gods restore you!—hark, I hear afar
 The beaten drum. Oh! for an arm
 Like the fierce thunderer's, when the earth-born sons
 Storm'd Heav'n, to fight this injur'd father's battle!
 That I could shift my sex, and dye me deep
 In his opposers' blood! but, as I may,
 With womens' weapons, piety and pray'rs,
 I'll aid his cause.—You never-erring gods
 Fight on his side, and thunder on his foes
 Such tempests as his poor ag'd head sustain'd:
 Your image suffers when a monarch bleeds:
 'Tis your own cause; for that your succours bring;
 Revenge yourselves, and right an injur'd king!

[*Exit.*

Edmund in his tent.

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love,
 Each jealous of the other, as the stung
 Are of the adder;—neither can be held,
 If both remain alive.—Where shall I fix?
 Cornwall is dead, and Regan's empty bed
 Seems cast by fortune for me—But bright Gonerill,
 Brings yet untasted beauty; I will use
 Her husband's count'nance for the battle, then
 Usurp at once his bed and throne. [*Enter Officers.*
 My trusty scouts, you're well return'd; have ye
 descried

The strength and posture of the enemy?

Off. We have, and were surpris'd to find
The banish'd Kent return'd, and at their head;
Your brother Edgar on the rear; old Glo'ster
(A moving spectacle) led through the ranks,
Whose pow'rful tongue, and more prevailing
wrongs,

Have so enrag'd their rustick spirit, that with
Th' approaching dawn we must expect a battle.

Edm. You bring a welcome hearing. Each to
his charge;

To-night repose you; and i'th' morn we'll give
The sun a fight that shall be worth his rising.

[*Exit.*]

Scene, a valley near the camp.

Enter Edgar and Gloucester.

Edgar. Here, Sir, take you the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

[*Exit.*]

Gloc. Thanks, friendly Sir,
The fortune your good cause deserves betide you.

An alarm, after which Gloucester speaks.

The fight grows hot; the whole war's now at work.
Where's

Where's Glo'ster now, that us'd to head the fray?
 No more of shelter, thou blind worm, but forth
 To th' open field? the war may come this way,
 And crush thee into rest.—Here lay thee down,
 And tear the earth. When, Edgar, wilt thou come
 To pardon, and dismiss me to the grave?

[*A retreat sounded.*]

Hark! a retreat; the king I fear has lost.

Re-enter Edgar.

Edgar. Away, old man, give me your hand, away!
 King Lear has lost; he and his daughter ta'en:
 Give me your hand. Come on!

Gloc. No farther, Sir; a man may rot, even here.

Edgar. What! in ill thoughts again? men must
 endure

Their going hence ev'n as their coming hither.

Gloc. Heaven's will be done then! henceforth I'll
 endure

Affliction, till it do cry out itself,

Enough, enough, and die.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Flourish. Enter in conquest, Albany, Gonerill, Regan,
 Edmund.—Lear, Kent, Cordelia, prisoners.*

Alb. It is enough to have conquer'd; cruelty
 Should ne'er survive the fight. Captain o'th' guard,

Treat well your royal prisoners, 'till you have
Our further orders, as you hold our pleasure.

Edm. Sir, I approve it safest to pronounce
Sentence of death upon this wretched king,
Whose age has charms in it, his title more,
'To draw the commons once more to his side ;
'Twere best prevent——

Alb. Sir, by your favour,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Regan. That's as we list to grace him.
Have you forgot that he did lead our pow'rs ?
Bore the commission of our place and person ?
And that authority may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot !
In his own merit he exalts himself,
More than in your addition.

Enter Edgar disguis'd.

Alb. What art thou ?

Edgar. Pardon me, Sir, that I presume to stop
A prince and conqueror ; yet ere you triumph,
Give ear to what a stranger can deliver
Of what concerns you more than triumph can.
I do impeach your general there of treason,

Lord

Lord Edmund, that usurps the name of Glo'ster,
 Of foulest practice 'gainst your life and honour;
 This charge is true : and wretched though I seem,
 I can produce a champion that will prove
 In single combat what I do avouch,
 If Edmund dares but trust his cause and sword.

Edm. What will not Edmund dare ?

My lord, I beg you'd instantly appoint
 The place where I may meet this challenger,
 Whom I will sacrifice to my wrong'd fame :
 Remember, Sir, that injur'd honour's nice,
 And cannot brook delay !

Alb. Anon, before our tent, i'th' army's view,
 There let the herald cry !

Edgar. I thank your highness in my champion's
 name :

He'll wait your trumpet's call.

Alb. Lead ! [*Exeunt Alb. and train.*

Edm. Come hither, captain, hark ! take thou
 this note ; [*Giving a paper.*

One step I have advanc'd thee ; if thou dost
 As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
 To nobler fortunes : know thou this, that men
 Are as the time is ; to be tender-minded
 Does not become a sword ; my great employment
 Will not bear question ; either say, thou'lt do't ;

Or thrive by other means.

Capt. I'll do't, my lord.

Edm. About it, and write happy when thou'lt done. [*Exit.*

Manent Lear, Kent, Cordelia, guarded.

Lear. Oh, Kent! Cordelia!

You are the only pair that e'er I wrong'd,
And the just gods have made you witnesses
Of my disgrace; the very shame of fortune,
To see me chain'd and shackled at these years!
Yet were you but spectators of my woes,
Not fellow-sufferers, all were well.

Cord. This language, Sir, adds yet to our affliction.

Lear. Thou, Kent, didst head the troops that fought my battle;

Expos'd thy life and fortunes for a master
That had (as I remember) banish'd thee.

Kent. Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your orders.

Banish'd by you, I kept me here disguis'd
To watch your fortunes, and protect your person!
You know you entertain'd a rough blunt fellow,
One Caius, and you thought he did you service.

Lear. My trusty Caius, I have lost him too!

'Twas

'Twas a rough honesty.

[Weeps.

Kent. I was that Caius,

Disguis'd in that coarse dress, to follow you.

Lear. My Caius too! wert thou my trusty
Caius?

Enough, enough.—

Cord. Ah, me, he faints! his blood forsakes his
cheek.

Help, Kent!

Lear. No, no, they shall not see us weep,

We'll see them rot first.—Guards, lead away to
prison.

Come, Kent; Cordelia, come;

We two will sit alone, like birds i'th' cage:

When thou dost ask my blessing, I'll kneel down

And ask of thee forgiveness; thus we'll live and
pray,

And take upon us the mystery of things,

As if we were Heav'n's spies.

Cord. Upon such sacrifices

The gods themselves throw incense.

Lear. Have I caught you?

He that parts us, must bring a brand from Heav'n:

Together we'll out-toil the spite of hell,

And die the wonders of the world; away!

[Exeunt guarded.

Flourish.

Flourish. Enter before the tents, Albany, Edmund, Guards and Attendants.

Alb. Now, Glo'ster, trust to thy single virtue:
for thy soldiers,

All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge: now let our trumpets speak,
And herald read out this. [*Herald reads.*]

“ If any man of quality within the lists of the
“ army will maintain upon Edmund, suppos'd earl
“ of Glo'ster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him
“ appear by the third sound of the trumpet; he is
“ bold in his defence.—Again, again.”

[*Trumpet answers from within.*]

Enter Edgar arm'd.

Alb. Lord Edgar!

Edm. Ha! my brother!

The only combatant that I could fear,
For in my breast guilt duels on his side:
But, conscience, what have I to do with thee
Awe thou the dull legitimate slaves: but
Was born a libertine, and so I keep me.

Edgar. My noble prince, a word;—ere we engage,
Into your highness' hands I give this paper;
It will the truth of my impeachment prove,
Whatever be my fortune in the fight.

Alb.

Alb. We shall peruse it.

Edgar. Now, Edmund, draw thy sword,
That if my speech has wrong'd a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice : here i'th' presence
Of this high prince, and this renowned list,
I brand thee with the spotted name of traitor ;
False to thy gods, thy father, and thy brother,
And, what is more, thy friend ; false to this prince :
If then thou shar'st a spark of Glo'ster's virtue,
Acquit thyself ; or if thou shar'st his courage,
Meet this defiance bravely.

Edm. I have a daring soul, and so have at thy
heart.

Sound, trumpet. [Fight, Edmund falls.
What you have charg'd me with, that I have done ;
And more, much more ; the time will bring it out.
'Tis past, and so am I.

Edgar. The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us : My dear father !
The dark and vicious place, where thee he got,
Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Thou'st spoken right, 'tis true,
Heav'n's justice has o'erta'en me ; I am here.
Yet, ere I die, some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly fend
(Be brief,) into the castle ; for my order

Is on the life of Lear and Cordelia.

Nay, fend in time.

Edgar. Run, run, oh, run!

Alb. The gods defend them! bear him hence a while. [*Edm. is borne off. Exeunt.*]

Scene, a prison.

Lear asleep, with his head on Cordelia's lap.

Cord. What toils, thou wretched king, hast thou endur'd,

To make thee draw, in chains, a sleep so found!

Oh, gods! a sudden gloom o'erwhelms me, and the image

Of death o'erspreads the place.—Ha! who are these?

Enter Captain and Officers, with cords.

Capt. Now, Sirs, dispatch; already you are paid in part, the best of your reward's to come.

Lear. Charge, charge, upon the flank; the left wing halts.

Push, push the battle, and the day's our own.

Their ranks are broken, down, down, with Albany!

Who holds my hands?—Oh, thou deceiving sleep;

I was this very minute on the chace,

And now a pris'ner here!—What mean the slaves?

You

You will not murder me?

Cord. Help, earth and Heaven!

For your souls' sake, dear Sirs, and for the gods'!

Off. No tears, good lady;

Come, Sirs, make ready your cords.

Cord. You, Sir, I'll seize,

You have a human form; and if no prayers

Can touch your soul to spare a poor king's life,

If there be any thing that you hold dear,

By that I beg you to dispatch me first.

Capt. Comply with her request; dispatch her first.

Lear. Off, hell-hounds! by the gods I charge you
spare her;

'Tis my Cordelia, my true pious daughter;

No pity?—Nay, then take an old man's vengeance.

*[Snatches a sword, and kills two of them;
the rest quit Cordelia, and turn upon him.]*

Enter Edgar, Albany, and Guards.

Edgar. Death! hell! ye vultures, hold your
impious hands,

Or take a speedier death than you would give.

Alb. Guards, seize those instruments of cruelty.

Gent. Look here, my lord; see where the good
old king

Has slain two of 'em.

Lear.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?
 I've seen the day, with my good biting faulchion
 I could have made 'em skip: I am old now,
 And these vile crosses spoil me; out of breath;
 Fy, oh! quite out of breath, and spent.

Alb. Bring in old Kent; and, Edgar, guide you
 hither

Your father, who you said was near; [*Ex. Edgar.*
 He may be an ear-witness at the least
 Of our proceedings. [*Kent brought in.*

Lear. Who are you?

My eyes are none o' th' best, I'll tell you straight:
 Oh, Albany! Well, Sir, we are your captives,
 And you are come to see death pass upon us.
 Why this delay?—Or is't your highness' pleasure
 To give us first the torture? say ye so?
 Why, here's old Kent and I, as tough a pair
 As e'er bore tyrant's stroke.—But, my Cordelia,
 My poor Cordelia here, oh, pity her!

Alb. Thou injur'd majesty,
 The wheel of fortune now has made her circle,
 And blessings yet stand 'twixt the grave and thee.

Lear. Com'st thou, inhuman lord, to sooth us
 back

To a fool's paradise of hope, to make
 Our doom more wretched? Go to, we are too well
 Acquainted

Acquainted with misfortune, to be gull'd
With lying hope; no, we will hope no more.

Alb. Know, the noble Edgar

Impeach'd lord Edmund, since the fight, of treason,
And dar'd him for the proof to single combat,
In which the gods confirm'd his charge by conquest;
I left ev'n now the traitor wounded mortally.

Lear. And whither tends this story?

Alb. Ere they fought,

Lord Edgar gave into my hands this paper;
A blacker scroll of treason and of lust
Than can be found in the records of hell;
There, sacred Sir, behold the character
Of Gonerill, the worst of daughters, but
More vicious wife.

Cord. Could there be yet addition to their guilt?
What will not they that wrong a father dare?

Alb. Since then my injuries, Lear, fall in with
thine,

I have resolv'd the same redress for both.

Kent. What says my lord?

Cord. Speak, for methought I heard
The charming voice of a descending god.

Alb. The troops, by Edmund rais'd, I have dis-
banded;

Those that remain are under my command.

What

What comfort may be brought to cheer your age,
 And heal your savage wrongs, shall be applied;
 For to your majesty we do resign
 Your kingdom, save what part yourself conferr'd
 On us in marriage.

Kent. Hear you that, my liege?

Cord. Then there are gods, and virtue is their
 care.

Lear. Is't possible?

Let the spheres stop their course, the sun make halt,
 The winds be hush'd, the seas and fountains rest;
 All nature pause, and listen to the change!
 Where is my Kent, my Caius?

Kent. Here, my liege.

Lear. Why I have news that will recall thy youth;
 Ha! didst thou hear't, or did th'inspiring gods
 Whisper to me alone? Old Lear shall be
 A king again.

Alb. Thy captive daughter too, the wife of
 France,

Unransom'd we enlarge, and shall, with speed,
 Give her safe convoy to her royal husband.

Lear. Cordelia then is Queen again. Mark that!
 Winds, catch the sound,
 And bear it on your rosy wings to Heav'n!
 Cordelia's still a Queen.

Re-enter

Re-enter Edgar with Gloucester.

Alb. Look, Sir, where pious Edgar comes,
Leading his eyeless father.

Gloc. Where's my liege?
Conduct me to his royal knees, to hail
His second birth of empire: my dear Edgar
Has with himself reveal'd the king's blest restaura-
tion.

Lear. My poor dark Glo'ster!

Gloc. Oh, let me kiss that once more scepter'd hand!

Lear. Speak, is not that the noble suff'ring Edgar?

Gloc. My pious son, more dear than my lost eyes.

Edgar. Your leave, my liege, for an unwelcome
message.

Edmund (but that's a trifle) is expir'd.

What more will touch you, your imperious daugh-
ters,

Gonerill and haughty Regan, both are dead,

Each by the other poison'd, at a banquet:

This, dying, they confess'd.

Cord. Oh, fatal period of ill-govern'd life!

Lear. Ingrateful as they were, my heart feels yet
A pang of nature for their wretched fall.

Gloc. Now, gentle gods, give Glo'ster his discharge.

Lear. No, Glo'ster, thou hast business yet for life;
Thou, Kent, and I, in sweet tranquility

Will gently pass the evening of our days;
Thus will we talk, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies: And our remains
Shall in an even course of thoughts be pass'd.
My child, Cordelia, all the gods can witness
How much thy truth to empire I prefer!
Thy bright example shall convince the world
(Whatever storms of fortune are decreed)
That truth and virtue shall at last succeed.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

E P I C Œ N E;

OR, THE

SILENT WOMAN.

A

C O M E D Y,

WRITTEN BY

B E N J O N S O N.

WITH ALTERATIONS.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, on
the 13th of January, 1776.*

P 2

ADVER-



A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE editor of the following comedy always considered it as one of the principal duties of a director of a theatre, to atone in some measure, for the mummery which his situation obliges him to exhibit, by bringing forward the productions of our most esteemed writers. The alterations he hazarded for this purpose having been generally approved, it is needless to point out or enforce their propriety; much less can he think it necessary to vindicate the established reputation of the author. Writers of the most distinguished taste and genius have honoured the **SILENT WOMAN** of **BEN JONSON** with the most lavish encomiums; but the criticks of our day, unawed by authority, and trusting to the light of their own understanding, have discovered that there is neither ingenuity nor contrivance in the fable, nature in the characters, nor wit nor humour in the dialogue. The present editor, however, cannot pay them so high a compliment, as to suppose it incumbent on him to defend the author and his admirers, or to make any apology for having, with the kind assistance of Mr. Garrick, promoted the

P R O L O G U E.

revival of *Epicæne*; the perusal of which he recommends in the closet, to those few acute spirits who thought it unworthy of the stage.

We think our fathers fools, *so wise we grow!*
Our wiser sons, no doubt, *will think us so.*

P R O L O G U E,

Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

HAPPY the soaring bard who boldly woos,
And wins the favour of, the tragick muse!
He from the grave may call the mighty dead,
In buskins and blank verse the stage to tread;
On Pompeys and old Cæsars rise to fame,
And join the poet's to th' historian's name.
The comick wit, alas! whose eagle eyes
Pierce nature thro', and mock the time's disguise,
Whose pencil living follies brings to view,
Survives those follies, and his portraits too;
Like star-gazers, deploras his luckless fate,
For last year's almanacks are out of date.

“ The

P R O L O G U E.

“The Fox, the Alchemist, the Silent Woman,
“Done by Ben Jonson, are out-done by no man.”

Thus sung in rough, but panegyrick, rhimes,
The wits and criticks of our author's times.
But now we bring him forth with dread and doubt,
And fear his *learned socks* are quite worn out.
The subtle Alchemist grows obsolete,
And Druggers' humour scarcely keeps him sweet.

To-night, if you would feast your eyes and ears,
Go back in fancy near two hundred years;
A play of Ruffs and Farthingales review,
Old English fashions, such as then were new!
Drive not Tom Otter's *Bulls and Bears* away;
Worse *Bulls and Bears* disgrace the present day.
On fair Collegiates let no critick frown!
A Ladies' Club still holds its rank in town.
If modern cooks, who nightly treat the pit,
Do not quite cloy and surfeit you with wit,
From the old kitchen please to pick a bit!
If once, with hearty stomachs to regale
On old Ben Jonson's fare, tho' somewhat stale,
A meal on Bobadil you deign'd to make,
Take *Epicæne* for his and Kitley's sake!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MOROSE,
 TRUEWIT,
 CLERIMONT,
 DAUPHINE,
 SIR JOHN DAW,
 LA-FOOLE,
 OTTER,
 CUTBERD,
 MUTE,

Mr. Bensley.
Mr. Palmer.
Mr. Davies.
Mr. Brereton.
Mr. Parsons.
Mr. King.
Mr. Yates.
Mr. Baddeley.
Mr. Wrighten.

EPICOENE,
 HAUGHTY,
 CENTAURE,
 MAVIS,
 MRS. OTTER,
 TRUSTY,

Ladies
 Collegiates.

Mr. Lamash.
Miss Sherry.
Mrs. Davies.
Miss Platt.
Mrs. Hopkins.
Mrs. Millidge.

E P I C Œ N E;

OR, THE

SILENT WOMAN.

A C T I.

An apartment in Clerimont's house.

Clerimont, Boy.

Clerimont.

HAVE you got the song yet perfect I gave
you, boy?

Boy. Yes, Sir.

Cler. Let me hear it.

Boy. You shall, Sir.

S O N G.

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powder'd, still perfum'd:
Lady, it is to be presum'd,

Though

Though art's hid causes are not found,
 All is not sweet, all is not found.
 Give me a look, give me a face,
 That makes simplicity a grace;
 Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
 Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
 Than all th' adulteries of art;
 They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

Enter Truewit.

Tru. Why, here's the man that can melt away his time, and never feels it! What between his mistress abroad, high fare at home, soft lodging, fine cloaths, and his fiddle; he thinks the hours have no wings, or the day no post-horse. Well, Sir Gallant, were you struck with the plague this minute, or condemn'd to any capital punishment tomorrow, you would begin then to think, and value every particle o' your time, esteem it at the true rate, and give all for't.

Gler. Why, what should a man do?

Tru. Why, nothing; or, that, which when 'tis done, is as idle: Harken after the next horse-race, or hunting-match; lay wagers; swear upon Whitefoot's party; speak aloud, that my lords may hear you; visit my ladies at night, and be able to
 give

give 'em the character of every bowler or better o' the green. These be the things, wherein your fashionable men exercise themselves, and I for company.

Cler. Nay, if I have thy authority, I'll not leave yet. Come, the other are considerations, when we come to have grey heads, and weak hams; we'll think on 'em then; then we'll pray and fast.

Tru. Ay, and destine only that time of age to goodness, which our want of ability will not let us employ in evil?

Cler. Why, then 'tis time enough.

Tru. Yes, as if a man should sleep all the term, and think to effect his business the last day. Oh, Clerimont, see but our common disease! with what justice can we complain, that great men will not look upon us, nor be at leisure to give our affairs such dispatch as we expect, when we will never do it to ourselves; not hear, nor regard ourselves.

Cler. Foh, thou hast read Plutarch's Morals, now, or some such tedious fellow; and it shews so vilely with thee! 'Twill spoil thy wit utterly. Talk me of pins, and feathers, and ladies, and rushes, and such things: And leave this alone, 'till thou mak'st sermons.

Tru. Well, Sir, if it will not take, I have learned
to

to lose as little of my kindness, as I can. I'll do good to no man against his will, certainly. When were you at the college?

Cler. What college?

Tru. A new foundation, Sir, here i' the town, of ladies, that call themselves *the collegiates*; and give entertainment to all the wits, and *braveries* o' the time, as they call 'em: Cry down, or up, what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most *masculine*, or rather *hermaphroditical* authority; and every day gain to their college some new probationer.

Cler. Who is the president?

Tru. The grave and youthful matron, the lady Haughty.

Cler. A plague of her autumnal face, her piec'd beauty: There's no man can be admitted till she be ready, now-a-days, till she has painted, and perfum'd.

Tru. And a wise lady will keep a guard always. I once followed a rude fellow into a chamber where the poor madam, for haste, and troubled, snatch'd at her peruke, to cover her baldness, and put it on the wrong way.

Cler. Oh prodigy!

Tru. And the unconscionable knave held her in
compliment

compliment an hour with that revers'd face, when I still look'd when she should talk from the other side.

Cler. Why, thou shouldst have reliev'd her.

Tru. No faith, I let her alone; as we'll let this argument, if you please, and pass to another. When saw you Sir Dauphine Eugene?

Cler. Not these three days. Shall we go to him this morning? He is very melancholick, I hear.

Tru. Sick o' the uncle, is he? I met that stiff piece of formality, his uncle, yesterday, with a huge turbant of night-caps on his head, buckled over his ears.

Cler. Oh, that's his custom when he walks abroad. He can endure no noise, man.

Tru. So I have heard. But is the disease so ridiculous in him as it is made? They say he has been upon divers treaties with the fish-wives, and orange-women; and articles propounded between them: Marry, the chimney-sweepers will not be drawn in.

Cler. No, nor the broom-men: They stand out stiffly. He cannot endure a costard-monger, he swoons if he hear one.

Tru. Methinks a smith should be ominous.

Cler. Or any hammer-man. A brazier is not
suffered

suffered to dwell in the parish, nor an armourer. He would have hang'd a pewterer's 'prentice once, for being o' that trade.

Tru. A trumpet would fright him terribly, or the hau'boys.

Cler. Out of his senses. The waights of the city have a pension of him not to come near that ward. This youth practis'd on him one night like the bellman, and never left till he had brought him down to the door, with a long sword: And there left him flourishing with the air. And, another time, a fencer, going to his prize, had his drum most tragically run through, for taking that street in his way at my request.

Tru. A good wag! How does he for the bells?

Cler. Why, Sir, he hath chosen a street to live in, so narrow at both ends, that it will receive no coaches, nor carts, nor any of those common noises: And as for the bells, the frequency of ringing has made him devise a room, with double walls, and treble cielings; the windows close shut and calk'd: And there he lives by candlelight. He turn'd away a man last week, for having a pair of new shoes that creak'd. And his fellow waits on him now in tennis-court socks, or slippers soal'd with wool: And they talk to each other in a trunk. See, who comes here!

Enter

Enter Dauphine.

Dau. How now? what ail you, Sirs? dumb?

Tru. Struck into stone, almost, I am here, with tales o' thine uncle! There was never such a prodigy heard of.

Dau. I would you would once lose this subject, my masters, for my sake. They are such as you are, that have brought me into that predicament I am with him.

Tru. How is that?

Dau. Marry, that he will disinherit me. No more. He thinks I, and my company, are authors of all the ridiculous stories told of him.

Tru. 'Slife, I would be the author of more to vex him; that purpose deserves it: It gives the law of plaguing him. I'll tell thee what I would do. I would make a false almanack, get it printed; and then have him drawn out on a coronation-day to the Tower-wharf, and kill him with the noise of the ordnance. Disinherit thee! he cannot, man. Art not thou next of blood, and his sister's son?

Dau. Ay, but he will thrust me out of it, he vows, and marry.

Tru. How! can he endure no noise, and will venture on a wife?

Cler. Yes; why, thou art a stranger, it seems, to his

his best trick, yet. He has employ'd a fellow this half year, all over England, to hearken him out a dumb woman; be she of any form, or any quality, so she be able to bear children: Her silence is dowry enough, he says.

Tru. But I trust he has found none.

Cler. No; but he has heard of one that's lodg'd i' the next street to him, who is exceedingly soft-spoken; thrifty of her speech; that spends but six words a-day; and her he's about now, and shall have her.

Tru. Is't possible? who is his agent i' the business?

Cler. Marry, a barber; an honest fellow, one that tells Dauphine all here.

Tru. Why, you oppresses me with wonder! A woman, and a barber, and love no noise?

Cler. Yes, faith. The fellow trims him silently, and has not the snap with his sheers or his fingers: And that continency in a barber he thinks so eminent a virtue, as it has made him chief of his counsel.

Tru. Is the barber to be seen? or the wench?

Cler. Yes, that they are.

Tru. I pr'ythee, Dauphine, let's go thither.

Dau. I have some business now: I cannot i'faith.

Tru. You shall have no business shall make you neglect

neglect this, Sir; we'll make her talk, believe it; or if she will not, we can give out at least, so much as shall interrupt the treaty: We will break it. Thou art bound in conscience, when he suspects thee without cause, to torment him.

Dau. Not I, by any means. I'll give no suffrage to't. He shall never have that plea against me, that I oppos'd the least fancy of his. Let it lie upon my stars to be guilty, I'll be innocent.

Tru. Yes, and be poor, and beg; do, innocent; I pry'thee, Ned, where lives she? let him be innocent still.

Cler. Why, right over-against the barber's; in the house where Sir John Daw lives.

Tru. You do not mean to confound me!

Cler. Why?

Tru. Does he that would marry her know so much?

Cler. I cannot tell.

Tru. 'Twere enough of imputation to her with him.

Cler. Why?

Tru. The only talking Sir i' the town! Jack Daw! and he teach her not to speak! God b'w'you. I have some business too.

Cler. Will you not go thither then?

Tru. Not with the danger to meet Daw, for mine ears.

Cler. Why? I thought you two had been upon very good terms.

Tru. Yes, of keeping distance.

Cler. They say, he is a very good scholar.

Tru. Ay, and he says it first. A fellow that pretends only to learning, buys titles, and nothing else of books in him.

Cler. The world reports him to be very learned.

Tru. I am sorry, the world should so conspire to belie him.

Cler. Good faith, I have heard very good things come from him.

Tru. You may. There's none so desperately ignorant to deny that: Would they were his own! God b'w' you, gentlemen. [*Exit hastily.*]

Manent Dauphine, Clerimont, Boy.

Cler. This is very abrupt!

Dau. Come, you are a strange open man, to tell every thing thus.

Cler. Why, believe it, Dauphine, 'Truëwit's a very honest fellow.

Dau. I think no other; but this frank nature of his is not for secrets.

Cler.

Cler. Nay then, you are mistaken, Dauphine: I know where he has been well trusted, and discharg'd the trust very truly, and heartily.

Dau. I contend not, Ned; but, with the fewer a business is carried, it is ever the safer. Now we are alone, if you'll go thither, I am for you.

Cler. When were you there?

Dau. Last night; and such sport has fallen out! Daw does nothing but court her; and the wrong way. He would seduce her, and praises her modesty; desires that she would talk and be free, and commends her silence in verses; which he reads, and swears are the best that ever man made. Then rails at his fortunes, stamps, and raves that he is not made a privy-counsellor, and call'd to affairs of state. We are invited to dinner together, he and I, by one that came thither to him, Sir La-Foole.

Cler. Oh, that's a precious mannikin!

Dau. Do you know him?

Cler. Ay; and he will know you too, if e'er he saw you but once, tho' you should meet him at church in the midst of prayers. He will salute a judge upon the bench, and a bishop in the pulpit, a lawyer when he is pleading at the bar, and a lady when she is dancing in a masque, and put her out. He gives plays, and suppers, and invites his guests

to 'em aloud out of his window, as they ride by in coaches. He has a lodging in the Strand on purpose: Or to watch when ladies are gone to the China houses, or the Exchange, that he may meet 'em by chance, and give 'em presents, some two or three hundred pounds' worth of toys, to be laugh'd at. He is never without a spare banquet, or sweet-meats in his chamber, for women to alight at, and come up to for a bait.

Dau. Excellent! What is his Christian name? I have forgot.

Cler. Sir Amorous La-Foole.

Boy. The gentleman is here that owns that name.

Cler. 'Heart, he's come to invite me to dinner, I hold my life.

Dau. Like enough: Prithee let's have him up.

Cler. Shew him in, boy! [*Exit boy.*] I'll make him tell us his pedigree, now; and what meat he has to dinner; and who are his guests; and the whole course of his fortunes, with a breath.

Enter La-Foole.

La-F. Save dear Sir Dauphine! honour'd master Clerimont!

Cler. Sir Amorous! you have very much honoured my lodging with your presence.

La-F.

La-F. Good faith, it is a fine lodging! almost, as delicate a lodging as mine.

Cler. Not so, Sir.

La-F. Excuse me, Sir, if it were i' the Strand, I assure you. I am come, Master Clerimont, to intreat you to wait upon two or three ladies, to dinner to-day.

Cler. Where hold you your feast?

La-F. At Tom Otter's, Sir.

Dau. Tom Otter's? What's he?

La-F. Captain Otter, Sir; he is a kind of gamester, but he has had command both by sea and by land.

Dau. Oh, then he is an amphibious animal.

La-F. Ay, Sir; his wife was the rich chinawoman, that the courtiers visited so often; that gave her rare entertainment. She commands all at home.

Cler. Then, she is captain Otter.

La-F. You say very well, Sir; she is my kinf-woman, a La-Foole by the mother-side, and will invite any great ladies, for my sake.

Dau. Not of the La-Foole's of Essex?

La-F. No, Sir, the La-Foole's of London; a very numerous family.

Cler. Now he's in.

La-F. They all come out of our house, the La-

Foole's o' the North, the La-Foole's o' the West, the La-Foole's o' the East and South. We are as ancient a family as any is in Europe. But I myself am descended lineally of the French La-Foole's. And, we do bear our coat yellow; Or, checker'd Azure, and Gules, and some three or four colours more, which is a very noted coat, and has, sometimes, been solemnly worn by divers nobility of our house—but let that go, antiquity is not respected now.—I had a brace of fat does sent me, gentlemen, and half a dozen of pheasants, a dozen or two of godwits, and some other fowl, which I would wish eaten, while they are good, and in good company. There will be a great lady or two, my lady Haughty, my lady Centaure, Mistress Dol Mavis. And they come o' purpose, to see the Silent Gentlewoman, Mistress *Epicæne*, that honest Sir John Daw has promised to bring thither. And then, Mistress Trusty, my lady's woman, will be there too, and this honourable knight, Sir Dauphine, with yourself Master Clerimont. And we'll be very merry, and have fiddlers and dance. I have been a mad wag in my time, and have spent some crowns since I was a page in court, to my lord Lofty, and after, my lady's gentleman-usher, who got me knighted in Ireland, since it pleased

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pleas'd my elder brother to die. I had as fair a gold jerkin on that day, as any was worn in the Island Voyage, or at Cadiz, none disprais'd, and I came over in it hither, shew'd myself to my friends in court, and after went down to my tenants in the country, and survey'd my lands, let new leases, took their money, spent it in the eye o' the land here, upon ladies. And now I can take up at my pleasure.

Dau. Can you take up ladies, Sir?

Cler. Oh, let him breathe; he has not recover'd.

Dau. Would I were your half, in that commodity.

La-F. No, Sir, excuse me: I meant money, which can take up any thing. I have another guest, or two, to invite, and say as much to, gentlemen. I'll take my leave abruptly, in hope you will not fail—your servant.

Dau. We will not fail you, Sir precious La-Foole; [*Exit La-Foole.*] but she shall, that your ladies come to see; if I have credit afore Sir Daw.

Cler. Did you ever hear such a bellows-blower as this?

Dau. Or such a rook as the other! that will betray his mistress to be seen. Come, 'tis time we prevented it.

Cler. Go. Poor Sir Amorous! [*Exeunt laughing.*]

A C T II.

An apartment in the house of Morose.

Morose, Mute.

Morose.

CAN not I yet find out a more compendious method, to save my servants the labour of speech, and mine ears the discord of sounds? Let me see: All discourses but my own afflict me; they seem harsh, impertinent, and tiresome. Is it not possible, that thou shouldst answer me by signs, and I apprehend thee, fellow? speak not, though I question you. [*At the breaches still the fellow makes legs or signs.*] You have taken the ring off from the street-door, as I bad you? answer me not by speech, but by silence, unless it be otherwise (—) very good. And, you have fastened on a thick quilt, or flock-bed, on the outside of the door; that if they knock with their daggers, or with brickbats, they can make no noise? but with your leg, your answer, unless it be otherwise (—) very good. This is not only
fit

fit modesty in a servant, but good state and discretion in a master. And you have been with Cutberd the barber, to have him come to me? (—) good. And he will come presently? answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise: If it be otherwise, shake your head, or shrug. (—) So. Your Italian, and Spaniard, are wise in these! and it is a frugal and comely gravity. How long will it be ere Cutberd come? stay! if an hour, hold up your whole hand; if half an hour, two fingers; if a quarter, one; (—) a curled finger! *half* a quarter. 'Tis well. And have you given him a key, to come in without knocking? (—) good. And is the lock oiled, and the hinges, to-day? (—) good. And the quilting of the stairs no where worn out and bare? (—) very good. I see, by much doctrine, it may be effected; stand by. The Turk, in his divine discipline, is admirable, exceeding all the potentates of the earth; still waited on by mutes; and all his commands so executed; yea, even in the war (as I have heard) and in his marches, most of his charges and directions given by signs, and with silence: an exquisite art! and I am heartily ashamed, and angry oftentimes, that the princes of Christendom, should suffer a Barbarian to transcend 'em in so high a point
of

of felicity. I will practise it hereafter. [*Horn without.*] How now? oh! oh! what villain, what prodigy of mankind is that? look. [*Exit Mute.*] Oh! cut his throat, cut his throat! What murderer, hell-hound, devil, can this be?

[*One winds a horn without again.*

Re-enter Mute.

Mute. A post from the court——

Mor. Out, rogue, and must thou blow thy horn, too?

Mute. Alas, it is a post from the court, Sir, that says, he must speak with you on pain of death——

Mor. Pain of thy life, be silent? [*Horn again.*

Then enter Truewit.

Tru. By your leave, Sir! I am a stranger here: Is your name master Morose? Is your name master Morose? Fishes? Pythagoreans all? This is strange. What say you, Sir? nothing? Has Harpocrates been here with his club, among you? Well, Sir, I will believe you to be the man at this time: I will venture upon you, Sir. Your friends at court commend 'em to you, Sir——

Mor. O men! O manners! Was there ever such an impudence?

Tru.

Tru. And are extremely solicitous for you, Sir.

Mor. Whose knave are you?

Tru. Mine own knave, and your compeer, Sir.

Mor. Fetch me my sword—— [*Mute going.*]

Tru. You shall taste the one half of my dagger, if you do, groom; and you the other, if you stir, Sir: Be patient, I charge you, in the king's name, and hear me without insurrection. They say, you are to marry; to marry! do you mark, Sir?

Mor. How then, rude companion?

Tru. Marry, your friends do wonder, Sir, the Thames being so near, wherein you may drown so handsomely, or London-Bridge, at a low fall, with a fine leap to hurry you down the stream! or such a delicate steeple in the town as Bow, to vault from; or a braver height, as Paul's; or, if you affected to do it nearer home, and a shorter way, an excellent garret-window into the street; or, a beam in the said garret, with this halter, [*He shows him a halter.*] which they have sent, and desire that you would sooner commit your grave head to this knot, than to the wedlock noose; or take a little sublimate, and go out of the world, like a rat: Any way, rather than to follow this goblin Matrimony, Alas, Sir, do you ever think to find a chaste wife, in these times? now? when there are so many
 masques,

masques, plays, fanatical preachers, mad folks, and other strange sights to be seen, daily private and publick? If you had liv'd in king Ethelred's time, Sir, or Edward the Confessor's, you might, perhaps, have found in some cold country hamlet, then, a dull frosty wench, would have been contented with one man: Now, they will as soon be pleas'd with one leg, or one eye. I'll tell you, Sir, the monstrous hazards you shall run with a wife.

Mor. Good Sir, have I ever cozen'd any friends of yours of their land? bought their possessions? taken forfeit of their mortgage? begg'd a reversion from 'em? what have I done that may deserve this?

Tru. Nothing, Sir, that I know, but your itch of marriage.

Mor. Why, if I had assassinated your father, vitiated your mother, ravish'd your sisters——

Tru. I would kill you, Sir, I would kill you, if you had.

Mor. Why, you do more in this, Sir.

Tru. Alas, Sir, I am but a messenger: I but tell you, what you must hear. It seems, your friends are careful after your soul's health, Sir, and would have you know the danger; if, after you are married, your wife do run away with a vaulter, or the
Frenchman

Frenchman that walks upon ropes, why, it is not their fault; they have discharged their consciences, when you know what may happen.

Mor. No more, for Heaven's sake, Sir!

Tru. Nay, suffer valiantly, Sir, for I must tell you all the perils that you are obnoxious to. If she be fair, and young, no sweatmeats ever drew more flies. If foul and crooked, she'll be with them. If rich, and that you marry her dowry, not her, she'll reign in your house, as imperious as a widow. If noble, all her kindred will be your tyrants. If fruitful, as proud as May and humourous as April. If learned, there was never such a parrot. You begin to sweat, Sir, but this is not half, i'faith. Upon my faith, master serving-man, if you do stir, I will beat you.

Mor. Oh, what is my sin? what is my sin?

Tru. Then, if you love your wife, or rather dote on her, Sir; oh, how she'll torture you! and take pleasure i' your torments! You must keep what servants she please; what company she will; that friend must not visit you without her licence; and him she loves most, she will seem to hate most, to decline your jealousy; or, feign to be jealous of you first; and for that cause go live with her she-friend, that can instruct her in all the mysteries of
writing

writing letters, corrupting servants, taming spies; where she must have that rich gown for such a great day; a new one for the next; a richer for the third; be serv'd in silver; have the chamber fill'd with a succession of grooms, footmen, ushers, and other messengers; besides embroiderers, jewelers, tirewomen, sempsters, feather-men, perfumers; while she feels not how the land drops away, nor the acres melt; nor foresees the change, when the mercer has your woods for her velvets.

Mor. Gentle Sir, ha' you done? ha' you had your pleasure o' me?

Tru. Yes, Sir: God b'w' you, Sir. [*Going returns.*] One thing more (which I had almost forgot). This too, with whom you are to marry, may have made a conveyance of her virginity aforehand, as your wife widows do of their states, before they marry, in trust to some friend, Sir, and antedate you cuckold. The like has been heard of in nature. 'Tis no devis'd impossible thing, Sir. God b'w' you! I'll be bold to leave this rope with you, Sir, for a remembrance. Farewell, Mute. [*Exit.*]

Mor. Come, ha' me to my chamber: But first shut the door. Oh, shut the door: Is he come again? [*The horn again:*]

Enter

Enter Cutberd.

Cutb. 'Tis I, Sir, your barber,

Mor. Oh, Cutberd, Cutberd, Cutberd! here has been a cut-throat with me: Help me in to my bed, and give me phyfick with thy counsel. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to Sir John Daw's.

Enter Daw, Clerimont, Dauphine, and Epicæne.

Daw. Nay, an she will, let her refuse at her own charges: 'Tis nothing to me, gentlemen. But she will not be invited to the like feasts or guests every day.

Cler. Oh, by no means, she may not refuse—to stay at home, if you love your reputation: 'Slight, you are invited thither o' purpose to be seen, and laugh'd at by the lady of the college, and her shadows. This trumpeter hath proclaim'd you.

[*They dissuade her privately.*]

Dau. You shall not go; let him be laugh'd at in your stead, for not bringing you: And put him to his faculty of fooling, and talking loud to satisfy the company.

Cler. He will suspect us; talk aloud. Pray, mistress *Epicæne*, let's see your verses; we have Sir John Daw's leave: Do not conceal your servant's merit, and your own glories.

Daw.

Daw. Shew 'em, mistress, shew 'em; I dare own 'em. Nay, I'll read 'em myself too: An author must recite his own works. It is a *madrigal* of modesty.

Modest, and fair, for fair and good are near
Neighbours, howe'er.——

Dau. Very good.

Cler. Ay, is't not?

Daw. No noble virtue ever was alone,
But two in one.

Dau. Excellent!

Cler. That again, I pray, Sir John.

Dau. It has something in't like rare wit and sense.

Cler. Peace.

Daw. No noble virtue ever was alone,
But two in one.

Then, when I praise sweet modesty, I praise
Bright beauty's rays:
And having prais'd both beauty and modesty,
I have prais'd thee.

Dau. Admirable!

Cler. How it chimes, and cries tink i' the clove,
divinely!

Dau. Ay, 'tis Seneca.

Cler. No, I think 'tis Plutarch.

Daw.

Daw. The plague on Plutarch and Seneca! I hate it: Mine own imaginations, by that light. I wonder these fellows have such credit with gentlemen!

Cler. They ate very grave authors.

Daw. Grave asses! mere essayists! a few loose sentences, and that's all. A man would talk so, his whole age; I do utter as good things every hour, if they were collected and observ'd, as either of 'em.

Daw. Indeed, Sir John?

Cler. He must needs, living among the wits and *braveries* too.

Daw. Ay, and being president of 'em, as he is.

Daw. There's Aristotle, a mere common-place fellow; Plato, a discourser; Thucydides, and Livy, tedious and dry; Tacitus, an entire knot; sometimes worth the untying, very seldom.

Cler. What do you think of the poets, Sir John?

Daw. Not worthy to be nam'd for authors. Homer, an old tedious prolix ass, talks of curriers, and chines of beef; Virgil, of dunging of land, and bees; Horace, of I know not what.

Cler. I think so.

Daw. And so Pindar, Lycophron, Anacreon, Catullus, Lucan, Propertius, Tibullus, Martial,

Juvenal, Aufonius, Statius, Politian, Valerius, Flaccus, and the rest——

Cler. What a sack full of names he has got!

Daw. And how he pours 'em out! 'Fore Heaven, you have a simple learn'd servant, lady, in titles.

Cler. I muse a mistress can be so silent to the qualities of such a servant.

Daw. Silence is her virtue, Sir. I have written somewhat of her silence too.

Daw. In verse, Sir John? How can you justify your own being a poet, that so slight all the old poets?

Daw. Why, every man that writes in verse, is not a poet; you have of the wits that write verses, and yet are no poets: They are poets that live by it, the poor fellows that live by it. But silence!

Silence in woman, is like speech in man;
Deny't who can?

Daw. Not I, believe it: Your reason, Sir.

Daw. Nor is't a tale,
That female vice should be a virtue male,
Or masculine vice a female virtue be:

You shall it see
Prov'd with increase:
I know to speak, and she to hold her peace.

Do

Do you conceive me, gentlemen?

Daw. No, faith; how mean you *with increase*, Sir John?

Daw. Why, *with increase* is, when I court her for the common cause, and she says nothing, but *consentire videtur*; and in time is *gravida*.

Epi. Pray give me my verses again, servant.

Daw. If you'll ask 'em aloud, you shall.

Epi. Pray give me my verses again, servant.

Daw. Stay, I must keep these myself, but I'll go make out another copy, and you shall have them immediately, mistress. [*Kisses her hand and exits.*]

Gler. See, here's Truewit again.

Enter Truewit.

Where hast thou been, in the name of madness! thus accoutred with thy horn?

Tru. Where the sound of it might have pierc'd your senses with gladness, had you been in ear-reach of it. Dauphine, fall down and worship me; I have forbid the bans, lad: I have been with thy virtuous uncle, and have broke the match.

Daw. You ha' not, I hope.

Tru. Yes, faith; an thou shouldst hope otherwise, I should repent me: This horn got me entrance; kiss it. I had no other way to get in, but

by feigning to be a post: But when I got in once, I prov'd none, but rather the contrary, turn'd him into a post, with thundering into him the miseries of marriage. If ever Gorgon were seen in the shape of a woman, he hath seen her in my description. Why do you not applaud and adore me, Sirs? Why stand you mute? Are you stupid? You are not worthy o' the benefit.

Dau. Did not I tell you? Mischief!

Cler. I would you had plac'd this benefit somewhere else.

Tru. Why so?

Cler. You have done the most inconsiderate, rash, weak thing, that ever man did to his friend.

Dau. Friend! If the most malicious enemy I have, had studi'd to inflict an injury upon me, it could not be a greater.

Tru. Wherein? For Heav'n's sake, gentlemen, come to yourselves again.

Dau. But I presag'd thus much afore to you.

Cler. Would my lips had been folder'd when I spake on't! What mov'd you to be thus impertinent?

Tru. My masters, do not put on this strange face to pay my courtesy: Off with this vizor. Have good turns done you, and thank 'em this way!

Dau.

Dau. You have undone me. That which I have plotted for, and been maturing now these four months, you have blasted in a minute: Now I am lost, I may speak. This gentlewoman was lodg'd here by me o'purpose, and to be put upon my uncle, hath profest this obstinate silence for my sake, being my entire friend, and one that for the requital of such a fortune as to marry him, would have made me very ample conditions; where now, all my hopes are utterly miscarried by this unlucky accident.

Cler. Thus 'tis, when a man will be ignorantly officious, do services, and not know his *why*: I wonder what courteous itch possess'd you! You never did absurder part i' your life, nor a greater trespass to friendship or humanity.

Dau. Faith, you may forgiye it best; 'twas your cause principally.

Cler. I know it; would it had not!

Enter Cutberd.

Dau. How now, Cutberd? what news?

Cut. The best, the happiest that ever was, Sir! There has been a mad gentleman with your uncle this morning (I think this be the gentleman) that has almost talk'd him out of his wits, with threatening him from marriage——

Dau. On, I pr'ythee!

Cut. And your uncle, Sir, he thinks 'twas done by your procurement; therefore he will see the party you wot of presently; and if he like her, he says, and that she be so inclining to dumb, as I have told him, he swears he will marry her to-day, instantly, and not defer it a minute longer.

Dau. Excellent! beyond our expectation!

Tru. Beyond our expectation? by this light, I knew it would be thus.

Dau. Nay, sweet 'Fruewit, forgive me.

Tru. No, I was ignorantly *officious, impertinent*: This was the *absurd, weak* part.

Cler. Wilt thou ascribe that to merit now, was mere fortune?

Tru. Fortune! mere management. Fortune had not a finger in't. I saw it must necessarily in nature fall out so: My genius is never false to me in these things. Shew me how it could be otherwise.

Dau. Nay, gentlemen, contend not; 'tis well now.

Tru. Alas, I let him go on with *inconsiderate, and rash*, and what he pleas'd.

Cler. Away, thou strange justifier of thyself, to be wiser than thou wert, by the event!

Tru. Event! by this light, I foresaw it, as well as the stars themselves.

Dau.

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Dau. Nay, gentlemen, 'tis well now: Do you two entertain Sir John Daw with discourse, while I fend her away with instructions.

Tru. I'll be acquainted with her first, by your favour.

Cler. Master Truewit, lady, a friend of ours.

Tru. I am sorry I have not known you sooner, lady, to celebrate this rare virtue of your silence.

Cler. Faith, an you had come sooner, you should ha' seen and heard her well celebrated in Sir John Daw's madrigals. [*Exe. Dau. Epi. and Cut.*]

Re-enter Daw.

Tru. Jack Daw, save you; when saw you La-Foole?

Daw. Not since last night, master Truewit.

Tru. That's a miracle! I thought you had been inseparable.

Daw. He's gone to iavite his guests.

Tru. God so! 'tis true. What a false memory have I towards that man! I am one: I met him ev'n now, upon that he calls his delicate fine black horse, rid into a foam, with posting from place to place, and person to person, to give him the *cue*. Never was poor captain took more pains at a muster to shew men, than he, at this meal, to shew friends.

R 4

Daw,

Daw. Is mistress *Epicæne* gone?

Cler. Gone afore, with Sir Dauphine, I warrant, to the place.

Tru. Gone afore! that were a manifest injury, a disgrace and a half; to refuse Sir John at such a festival time as this, being a bravery, and a wit too.

Cler. Tut, he'll swallow it like cream.: He's better read, than to esteem any thing a disgrace, is offered him from a mistress.

Daw. Nay, let her e'en go; she shall sit alone, and be dumb in her chamber a week together, for John Daw, I warrant her: Does she refuse me?

Cler. No, Sir, do not take it so to heart: Good faith, Truewit, you were to blame to put it into his head, that she does refuse him.

Tru. Sir, she does refuse him palpably, however you mince it. An I were as he, I would swear to speak ne'er a word to her to-day for't.

Daw. By this light, no more I will not.

Tru. Nor to any body else, Sir.

Daw. Nay, I will not say so, gentlemen.

Cler. It had been an excellent happy condition for the company, if you could have drawn him to it.

Daw. I'll be very *melancholick*, i'faith.

Cler. As a dog, if I were as you, Sir John.

Tru. Or a snail, or a wood-louse: I would roll myself

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myself up for this day in troth, they should not unwind me.

Daw. By this pick-tooth, so I will.

Cler. 'Tis well done: He begins already to be angry with his teeth.

Daw. Will you go, gentlemen?

Cler. Nay, you must walk alone, if you be right melancholick, Sir John.

Tru. Yes, Sir, we'll dog you, we'll follow you afar off. [Exit Sir John.

Cler. Was there ever such a two-yards of knight-hood measur'd out by time, to be sold to laughter?

Tru. A mere talking mole! hang him: No mushroom was ever so fresh. A fellow so utterly nothing, as he knows not what he would be.

Cler. Let's follow him: But first, let's go to Dauphine; he's hovering about the house, to hear what news.

Tru. Content.

[Exeunt.

Scene, the house of Morose.

Enter Morose and Mute, meeting Epicæne and Cutberd.

Mor. Welcome, Cutberd; draw near with your fair charge: And in her ear, softly entreat her to unmask (——) So. Is the door shut? (——)

Enough.

Enough. Now, Cutberd, with the same discipline I use to my family, I will question you. As I conceive, Cutberd, this gentlewoman is she you have provided, and brought, in hope she will fit me in the place and person of a wife? (—) Very well done, Cutberd. I conceive besides, Cutberd, you have been pre-acquainted with her birth; education, and qualities, or else you would not prefer her to my acceptance, in the weighty consequence of marriage. This I conceive, Cutberd. (—) Very well done, Cutberd. Give aside now a little, and leave me to examine her condition, and aptitude to my affection. Give aside! [*Cutberd retires.*] She is exceeding fair, and of a special good favour; a sweet composition, or harmony of limbs; her temper of beauty has the true height of my blood. [*He goes about her, and views her.*] 'The knave hath exceedingly well fitted me without: I will now try her within. Come near, fair gentlewoman. [*At the breaks she curtsies.*] Let not my behaviour seem rude; though unto you, being rare, it may haply appear strange. (—) Nay, lady, you may speak, though Cutberd and my man might not; for of all sounds, only the sweet voice of a fair lady has the just length of mine ears. I beseech you, say, lady; out of the first fire of meeting eyes

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eyes (they say) love is stricken: Do you feel any such motion? ha, lady? (—) Alas, lady, these answers by silent curt'sies are too courtless and simple. Can you speak, lady?

Epi. Judge you, forsooth. [*She speaks softly.*]

Mor. What say you, lady? Speak out, I beseech you.

Epi. Judge you, forsooth.

Mor. O' my judgment, a divine softness! Excellent! Divine! If it were possible she should hold out thus! Peace, Cutberd; thou art made for ever, as thou hast made me, if this felicity have lasting: But I will try her further. And can you, dear lady, not taking pleasure in your tongue (which is woman's chiefest pleasure) think it plausible to answer me by silent gestures?

Epi. I should be sorry else.

Mor. What say you, lady? Good lady, speak out.

Epi. I should be sorry else.

Mor. That sorrow doth fill me with gladness. Oh, Morose! thou art happy above mankind! Pray that thou may'st contain thyself. But hear me, fair lady; I do also love to see her whom I shall chuse, to be the first and principal in all fashions; and how will you be able, lady, with this frugality
of

of speech, to give the manifold (but necessary) instructions, for those roses, these sleeves, those gloves, these fans, that bodice, and this embroidery? Ha! what say you, lady?

Epi. I'll leave it to you, Sir.

Mor. How, lady? Pray you rise a note.

Epi. I leave it to wisdom, and you, Sir.

Mor. Admirable creature! I will trouble you no more: I will not sin against so sweet a simplicity. Let me now be bold to print on these divine lips the seal of being mine. Cutberd, I give thee the lease of thy house free; thank me not, but with thy leg. (—) Go thy ways, and get me a minister presently, with a soft low voice; to marry us; away: softly, Cutberd: [*Exit Cutberd.*] Sirrah, conduct your mistress into the dining-room, your now mistress. [*Exeunt Muta and Epicœne.*]

Manet Morose.

Oh, my felicity! How shall I be reveng'd on mine insolent kinsman, and his plots, to fright me from marrying! This night I will get an heir, and thrust him out of my blood, like a stranger. He would be knighted forsooth, and thought by that means to reign over me; his title must do it: No, kinsman, I will now make you bring me the tenth lord's,

lord's, and the sixteenth lady's letter, kinsman; and it shall do you no good, kinsman. Your knight-hood itself shall come on its knees, and it shall be rejected; it shall be sued for its fees to execution, and not be redeem'd; it shall cheat at the twelve-penny ordinary, for its diet all the term time, and tell tales for it in the vacation to the hostess; it shall fright all its friends with borrowing letters; it shall not have money to discharge one tavern-reckoning, to invite the old creditors to forbear, or the new, that should be, to trust. It shall not have hope to repair itself by Constantinople, Ireland or Virginia; but the best and last fortune to it knight-hood shall be, to make Doll Tearsheet, or Kate Common a lady, and so knight-hood may eat. [*Exit.*]

Scene the street.

Enter Truewit, Dauphine, Clerimont.

Tru. Are you sure he is not gone by?

Dau. No, I staid in the shop ever since.

Cler. But he may take the other end of the lane.

Dau. No; I told him I would be here at this end: I appointed him hither.

Tru. What a barbarian it is to stay then!

Dau. Yonder he comes.

Cler.

Cler. And his charge left behind him, which is a very good sign, Dauphine.

Enter Cutberd.

Dau. How now, Cutberd? succeeds it or no?

Cut. Past imagination, Sir, *omnia secunda*; you could not have pray'd to have had it so well; *Saltat senex*, as it is i' the proverb; he does triumph in his felicity, admires the party! He has given me the lease of my house too; and I am now going for a silent minister to marry 'em, and away.

Tru. 'Slight, get one of the silent'd ministers; a zealous brother would torment him purely.

Cut. *Cum privilegio*, Sir.

Dau. O, by no means! let's do nothing to hinder it now: When 'tis done and finished, I am for you, for any device of vexation.

Cut. And that shall be within this half-hour, upon my dexterity, gentlemen. Contrive what you can in the mean time, *bonis avibus*. [*Exit.*]

Cler. How the slave doth *Latin* it!

Tru. It would be made a jest to posterity, Sirs, this day's mirth, if you will assist.

Cler. Bespew his heart that will not, I pronounce.

Dau. And for my part. What is't?

Tru. To translate all La-Foole's company, and his feast, thither to-day, to celebrate this bride-ale.

Dau.

Dau. Ay, marry; but how will't be done?

Tru. I'll undertake the directing all the lady-guests thither, and then the meat must follow.

Cler. For heaven's sake, let's effect it; it will be an excellent comedy of affliction, so many several noises.

Dau. But are they not at the other place already, think you?

Tru. I'll warrant you, not the college-honours: one o' their faces has not the priming-colour laid on yet.

Cler. O, but they'll rise earlier than ordinary to a feast.

Tru. Best go, and see, and assure ourselves.

Cler. Who knows the house?

Tru. I'll lead you; were you never there yet?

Dau. Not I.

Cler. Nor I.

Tru. Where ha' you liv'd then? not know Tom Otter!

Cler. No: What is he?

Tru. An excellent animal, equal with your Daw or La-Foole, if not superior; and does *Latin* it as much as your barber: He is his wife's subject, he calls her Princess, and at such times as these follows her up and down the house like a page,
with

with his hat off, partly for heat, partly for reverence. At this instant he is marshalling of his bull, bear, and horse.

Dau. Bull, bear, and horse! What be those, in the name of Sphinx?

Tru. Why, Sir, he has been a great man at the Bear-garden in his time, and from that sport has ta'en the witty denomination of his chief carousing cups. One he calls his bull, another his bear, another his horse. And then he has his lesser glasses, that he calls his deer and his ape; and several degrees of them too; and never is well, nor thinks any entertainment perfect, till these be brought out, and set o' the cupboard. Nay, he has a thousand things as good. He will rail on his wife, with certain common-places, behind her back; and to her face——

Dau. No more description of him. Let's go see him, I petition you. [*Exeunt.*

A C T

A C T III.

Scene, Otter's house.

Enter Otter, and Mrs. Otter.

Otter.

NAY, good princess, hear me *pauca verba!*
Mrs. Otter. By that light I'll have you chain'd up, with your bull-dogs and bear-dogs, if you be not civil the sooner. I'll send you to kennel, i'faith. You were best bait me with your bull, bear, and horse! Never a time that the courtiers or collegiates come to the house, but you make it a Shrove-Tuesday! I would have you get your Whitfontide velvet cap, and your staff i'your hand, to entertain 'em; yes in troth, do.

Otter. Not so, princess, neither; but, under correction, sweet princess, gi' me leave—These things I am known to the courtiers by: It is reported to them for my humour, and they receive it so, and do expect it. Tom Otter's bull, bear, and horse, are known allover England, in *rerum natura*.

Mrs. Otter. 'Fore me, I will *na-ture* 'em over to Paris-garden, and *na-ture* you thither too, if you pronounce 'em again. Is a bear a fit beast, or a bull; to mix in fociety with great ladies?

Otter. The horse thén, good princefs.

Mrs. Otter. Well, I am contented for the horse.

Otter. And it is a delicate fine horse; 'tis *Poetarum Pegasus*. Under correction, princefs, Jupiter did turn himself into a——*Taurus*, or bull, under correction, good princefs.

Mrs. Otter. By integrity, I'll fend you over to the Bank-side, I'll commit you to the master of the garden, if I hear but a syllable more. Is this according to the instrument, when I married you, That I would be princefs, and reign in mine own house; and you would be my subject and obey me? Do I allow you your half-crown a-day, to spend where you will, to vex and torment me at such times as these?

Enter Truewit, Dauphine, Clerimont, behind.

Who graces you with courtiers, or great personages, to speak to you out of their coaches, and come home to your house? Were you ever so much as look'd upon by a lord or a lady, before I married you, but on the Easter or Whitson holidays? and then

then out at the Banqueting-house window, when Ned Whiting or George Stone were at the stake?

Tru. Let's go stave her off him.

Mrs. Otter. Answer me to that. And did not I take you up from thence, in an old greasy buff-doublet, with points and green velvet sleeves, out at the elbows? You forget this.

Tru. She'll worry him, if we help not in time.

Mrs. Otter. Oh, here ate some o' the gallants! Go to, behave yourself distinctly, and with good morality; or, I protest, I'll take away your exhibition.

Tru. By your leave, fair Mistress Otter, I'll be bold to enter these gentlemen in your acquaintance.

Mrs. Otter. I shall not be obnoxious, or *difficil*, Sir.

Tru. How does my noble captain? Is the bull, bear, and horse in *rerum naturâ* still?

Otter. Sir, *sic visum superis*.

Mrs. Otter. I would you would but intimate 'em, do. Go your ways in, and get toasts and butter made for the woodcocks: That's a fit province for you.

Otter. [going out.] *Sic visum superis!* [Exit.

Cler. Alas, what a tyranny is this poor fellow married to!

Tru. Oh, but the sport will be anon, when we get him loose.

Dau. Dares he ever speak?

Tru. No Anabaptist ever rail'd with the like licence; but mark her language in the mean time, I beseech you.

Mrs. Otter. Gentlemen, you are very aptly come. My cousin, Sir Amorous, will be here briefly.

Tru. In good time, lady. Was not Sir John Daw here to ask for him, and the company?

Mrs. Otter. I cannot assure you, Mr. Truewit. Here was a very melancholy knight, that demanded my subject for somebody, a gentleman, I think.

Cler. Ay, that was he, lady.

Mrs. Otter. But he departed straight, I can resolve you.

Dau. What an excellent choice phrase this lady expresses in!

Tru. Oh, Sir! she is the only authentic courtier, that is not naturally bred one, in the city.

Mrs. Otter. You have taken that report upon trust, gentlemen.

Tru. No, I assure you, the court governs it so, lady, in your behalf.

Mrs. Otter. I am the servant of the court and courtiers, Sir.

Tru.

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Tru. They are rather your idolaters.

Mrs. Otter. Not so, Sir.

Enter Cutberd.

Dau. How now, Cutberd? Any crosfs?

Cut. Oh, no, Sir, *omnia bene*. 'Twas never better o' the hinges, all's fure. I have so pleas'd him with a curate, one that has catch'd a cold, Sir, and can scarce be heard six inches off; as if he spoke out of a bullrush that were not pick'd, or his throat were full of pith; a fine quick fellow, and an excellent barber of prayers. I came to tell you, Sir, that you might *omnem movere lapidem* (as they say) be ready with your vexation.

Dau. Gramercy, honest Cutberd; be thereabouts with thy key to let us in.

Cut. I will not fail you, Sir: *Ad manum*. [*Exit*.]

Tru. Well, I'll go watch my coaches.

Cler. Do; and we'll send Daw to you, if you meet him not. [*Exit Truewit*.]

Mrs. Otter. Is Mr. Truewit gone?

Dau. Yes, lady, there is some unfortunate business fallen out.

Mrs. Otter. So I judg'd by the physiognomy of the fellow that came in. Will it please you to enter the house further, gentlemen?

Dau. And your favour, lady: But we stay to

ſpeak with a knight, Sir John Daw, who is here come. We ſhall follow you, lady.

Mrs. Otter. At your own time, Sir. It is my couſin Sir Amorous's feaſt——

Dau. I know it, lady.

Mrs. Otter. And mine together. But it is for his honour, and therefore I take no name of it, more than of the place.

Dau. You are a bounteous kinſwoman.

Mrs. Otter. Your ſervant, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir John Daw.

Cler. Why, do you know it, Sir John Daw?

Daw. No, I am a rook if I do. What is it?

Cler. I'll tell you then; ſhe's married by this time. And whereas you were put i' th' head, that ſhe was gone with Sir Dauphine, I aſſure you, Sir Dauphine has been the nobleſt, honeſteſt friend to you, that ever gentleman of your quality could boaſt of. He has diſcover'd the whole plot, and made your miſtreſs ſo aſhamed of her injury to you, that ſhe deſires you to forgive her, and but grace her wedding with your preſence to-day. She is to be married to a very good fortune, ſhe ſays, his uncle old Moroſe: And ſhe will'd me in private to tell you, that ſhe ſhall be able to do you more favours, and with more ſecurity now than before.

Daw.

Daw. Did she say so, i'faith?

Cler. Why what do you think of me, Sir John?
Ask Sir Dauphine.

Daw. Nay, I believe you. Good Sir Dauphine;
did she desire me to forgive her?

Daw. I assure you, Sir John, she did.

Daw. Nay then, I do with all my heart, and I'll
be *jovial*.

Cler. Yes; for look you, Sir, this was the injury
to you. La-Foole intended this feast to honour
her bridal-day, and made you the property to invite
the college ladies, and promise to bring her; and
then at the time, she would have appear'd (as his
friend) to have given you the slip. Whereas now,
Sir Dauphine has brought her to a feeling of it,
with this kind of satisfaction, that you shall bring
all the ladies to the place where she is, and be very
jovial; and there, she will have a dinner, which
shall be in your name: And so disappoint La-Foole,
to make you whole again.

Daw. As I am a knight, I honour her, and for-
give her heartily.

Cler. About it then presently. Truewit is gone
before to confront the coaches, and to acquaint
you with so much, if he meet you. Join with him,
and 'tis well. See, here comes your antagonist,
but take you no notice, and be very *jovial*.

Enter La-Foole.

La-F. Are the ladies come, Sir John Daw, and your mistress?

Daw. Yes, the ladies *are* come, Sir Amorous! and my *mistress* is come, Sir Amorous: And we'll be very *joyful*, Sir Amorous! Your servant, Sir Amorous! [*Exit Daw.*]

La-F. Sir Dauphine! you are exceeding welcome, and honest master Clerimont. Where's my cousin? Did you see no collegiates, gentlemen?

Daw. Collegiates! do you not hear, Sir Amorous, how you are abus'd?

La-F. How, Sir?

Cler. Will you speak so kindly to Sir John Daw, that has done you such an affront?

La-F. Wherein, gentlemen? Let me be a suitor to you to know, I beseech you!

Cler. Why, Sir, his mistress is married to-day, to Sir Dauphine's uncle, your cousin's neighbour, and he has diverted all the ladies, and all your company thither, to frustrate your provision, and stick a disgrace upon you. He was here, now, to have inticed us away from you too. But we told him his own I think.

La-F. Has Sir John Daw wrong'd me so inhumanly?

Daw.

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Dau. He has done it, Sir Amorous, most maliciously and treacherously: but if you'll be rul'd by us, you shall quit him i'faith.

La-F. Good gentlemen! I'll make one, believe it. How, I pray?

Dau. Marry, Sir, get me your pheasants, and your godwits, and your best meat, and dish it in silver dishes of your cousin's presently, and say nothing, but clap me a clean towel about you, like a sewer; and bare-headed, march afore it with a good confidence ('tis but over the way, hard by) and we'll second you, where you shall set it o' the board, and bid 'em welcome to't, which shall shew 'tis yours, and disgrace his preparation utterly: And for your cousin, whereas she should be troubled here at home with making welcome, she shall transfer all that labour thither, be a principal guest herself, and be honour'd, and have her health drunk as often, and as loud as the best of 'em.

La-F. I'll go tell her presently. It shall be done; that's resolved. [Exit.

Cler. I thought he would not hear it out, but 'twould take him.

Dau. Well, there be guests, and meat now; how shall we do for musick?

Cler. The smell of the venison, going thro' the street, will invite one noise of fiddlers or other.

Dau.

Dau. I would it would call the trumpeters thither.

Cler. They have intelligence of all feasts. Twenty to one but he have 'em.

Dau. 'Twill be a most solemn day for my uncle, and an excellent fit of mirth for us.

Cler. Ay, if we can hold up the emulation betwixt Foole and Daw, and never bring them to expostulate.

Dau. Tut, flatter 'em both, (as Truewit says) and you may take their understandings in a purse-net.

Cler. See! Sir Amorous has his towel on already: Have you persuaded your cousin?

Re-enter La-Foole.

La-F. Yes, 'tis very feasible: She'll do any thing, she says, rather than the La-Fooles shall be disgraced.

Dau. She is a noble kinswoman. It will be such a device, Sir Amorous! It will pound all your enemies' practices to powder, and blow him up with his own mine, his own train.

La-F. Nay, we'll give fire, I warrant you.

Cler. But you must carry it privately, without any noise, and take no notice by any means.

Enter

Enter Otter.

Otter. Gentlemen, my princefs says you shall have all her silver dishes, *festinate*: And she's gone to alter her tire a little, and go with you.

Cler. And yourself too, captain Otter.

Dau. By any means, Sir.

Otter. Yes, Sir, I do mean it: But I would entreat my cousin Sir Amorous, and you, gentlemen, to be suitors to my princefs, that I may carry my bull and bear, as well as my horse.

Cler. That you shall do, captain Otter.

La-F. My cousin will never consent, gentlemen.

Dau. She must consent, Sir Amorous, to reason.

La-F. Why, she says they are no *decorum* among ladies.

Otter. But they are *decora*, and that's better, Sir.

Dau. Where is your princefs, captain? Pray be our leader.

Otter. That I shall, Sir.

Cler. Make haste, good Sir Amorous. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to the house of Morose.

Morose, Epicæne, and Cutberd.

Mor. The ceremony, thank Heaven, is over.—
Might not the ring bind, without idle discourse?

Give

Give the priest an angel for himself, Cutberd, and a brace of angels for his cold. It is fit we should thank fortune, double to nature, for any benefit she confers upon us: Besides, it is his imperfection, but my solace. [*Exit Cutberd.*] How much happier am I than in old time, Pigmalion, possessing a statue, on whom Heaven hath already bestowed animation! Approach, thou living marble! thou rich vein of beauty, approach! Grieve not that thou art poor, and thy friends deceased, love! Thou hast brought a wealthy dowry in thy silence; and in respect of thy poverty, I shall have thee more loving and obedient.

Enter Truewit.

Tru. Where's master Morose?

Mor. Is he come again? Lord have mercy upon me!

Tru. Heaven save you, Sir, and give you all contentment in your fair choice, here! Before, I was the bird of night to you, the owl; but now, I am the messenger of peace, a dove, and bring you the glad wishes of many friends to the celebration of this good hour.

Mor. What hour, Sir?

Tru. Your marriage-hour, Sir. I commend your resolution, that (notwithstanding all the dangers I
laid

laid afore you, in the voice of a night-crow) would yet go on, and be yourself. It shews you are a man constant to your own ends, and upright to your purposes, that would not be put off with left-handed cries.

Mor. How should you arrive at the knowledge of so much?

Tru. Why did you ever hope, Sir, committing it to a priest, that less than the whole town should know it? The peal of bells shall fill the air with it; the drums shall reverberate the happy tidings; and at length the cannon shall bring you, like another Jove, in thunder to your Semele. There will be a troop of fashionable ladies from the college to visit you presently, and their train of minions and followers.

Mor. Oh, my torment, my torment!

Tru. Nay, if you endure the first half hour, Sir, so tediously, and with this irksomeness; what comfort, or hope, can this fair gentlewoman make to herself hereafter, in the consideration of so many years as are to come? Oh, here are the ladies!

Enter Daw, Haughty, Centaure, Mavis, and Trusty.

Daw. This way, madam.

Mor. Oh, the sea breaks in upon me! Another flood!

flood! an inundation! I shall be overwhelmed with noise. It beats already at my shores. I feel an earthquake in myself, for't.

Daw. Give you joy, fair lady! Give you joy, Mr. Morose! I have brought some ladies here to see and know you. My lady Haughty, this my lady Centaure, mistress Dol Mavis, mistress Trusty, my lady Haughty's woman.

Tru. Nay, Sir, you must kiss the ladies, you must not go away, now; they come toward you to seek you out.

Hau. P'faith, master Morose, would you steal a marriage thus, in the midst of so many friends, and not acquaint us? Well, I'll kiss you, notwithstanding the justice of my quarrel: You shall give me leave, mistress, to use a becoming familiarity with your husband.

Cent. Is this the Silent Woman?

Tru. A gentlewoman of very absolute behaviour, and of a good race.

Hau. We'll make her a collegiate.

Cent. Yes, faith, madam; and Mavis and she will set up aside.

Tru. Believe it, madam and mistress Mavis, she will sustain her part.

Mav. I'll tell you that, when I have talk'd with her, and tried her.

Hau.

Hau. Use her very civilly, Mavis.

Mav. So I will, madam.

Mor. Blessed minute! That they would whisper thus ever!

Tru. In the mean time, madam, would but your ladyship help to vex him a little! You know his disease; talk to him about the wedding ceremonies, or call for your gloves, or——

Hau. Let me alone. Centaure, help me. Master bridegroom, where are you?

Mor. Oh, it was too miraculously good to last.

Hau. We see no ensigns of a wedding here; no character of a bride-ale; where be our scarves and our gloves? I pray you, give 'em us. Let's know your bride's colours, and yours at least.

Cent. Alas, madam, he has provided none.

Mor. Had I known your ladyship's painter, I would.

Hau. He has given it you, Centaure, i'faith. But do you hear, Mr. Morose, a jest will not absolve you in this manner. You that have suck'd the milk of the court, been a courtier from the biggen to the night-cap (as we may say) and you to offend in such a high point of ceremony as this, and let your nuptials want all marks of solemnity! How much plate have you lost to-day (if you had
but

but regarded your profit) what gifts, what friends, thro' your mere rusticity?

Mor. Madam——

Hau. Pardon me, Sir, I must insinuate your errors to you. No gloves? no garters? no scarves? no epithalamium? no masque?

Daw. Yes, madam, I'll make an epithalamium; I promised my mistress; I have begun it already; Will your ladyship hear it?

Hau. Ay, good Jack Daw.

Mor. Will it please your ladyship command a chamber, and be private with your friend? My whole house is yours.

Tru. Come, you are a rude bridegroom; to entertain ladies of honour in this fashion.

Cent. He is a rude groom indeed.

Tru. By that light you deserve to be grafted, and have your horns reach from one side of the island to the other. Do not mistake me, Sir, I but speak this to give the ladies some heart again, not for any malice to you.

Mor. Is this your bravo, ladies?

Tru. If you utter such another word, I'll take mistress Bride in, and begin to you in a very sad cup, do you see? Go to, know your friends, and such as love you.

Enter

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Enter Clerimont.

Cler. By your leave, ladies. Do you want any musick? I have brought you variety of noises. Play, Sirs, all of you. [*Musick of all sorts.*]

Mor. Oh, a plot, a plot, a plot, a plot, upon me! This day I shall be their anvil to work on, they will grate me afunder. 'Tis worse than the noise of a saw.

Cler. No, they are hair, rosin, and cat-guts. I can give you the receipt.

Tru. Peace, boys.

Cler. Play, I say.

Tru. Peace, rascals. You see who's your friend now, Sir.

Enter La-Foole, Mrs. Otter, and servants, with dishes.

Look you here, Sir, what honour is done you unexpected, by your nephew; a wedding-dinner come, and a knight-fewer before it, for the more reputation: and fine Mrs. Otter, your neighbour, in the tail of it!

Mor. Is that Gorgon, that Medusa come? Hide me, hide me.

Tru. I warrant you, Sir, she will not transform you. Look upon her with a good courage. Pray

you entertain her, and conduct your guests in. No? Madam Haughty, will you entreat in the ladies? The bridegroom is so shame-fac'd here.

Hau. Will it please your ladyship, madam?

Gen. With the benefit of your company, mistress.

Mrs. Otter. 'Tis my place.

Mavis. You shall pardon me, Mistress Otter.

Tru. Captain Otter, what news?

Enter Otter.

Otter. I have brought my bull, bear, and horse, in private, and yonder are the trumpeters without, and the drum, gentlemen.

[*The drum and trumpets sound.*]

Mor. Oh, oh, oh!

Otter. And we will have a rouse in each of them anon, for bold Britons i'faith.

Mor. Oh, oh, oh!

All. Follow, follow, follow. [*Exeunt.*]

Manent Morose and Epicæne.

Mor. Oh, torment and misery! my house is the tower of Babel! But I will take courage, put on a martyr's resolution, and mock down all their temptings with patience. 'Tis but a day, and I will suffer heroically. Shall an ass exceed me in fortitude?

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fortitude? no. Nor will I betray my infirmities with hanging dull ears, and make them insult; but bear up bravely and constantly. 'Tis but a day; and the remnant of my life shall be quiet and easy. I have wedded a lamb; no tempests shall henceforth disturb us, no sound annoy us, louder than thy still, small voice, my love, soft as the whispering of summer breezes, or sweet murmur of turtles. Wives are wild cats; but thou shalt be a tame domestick animal, with velvet feet entering my chamber, and with the soft purring of delight and affection, inviting the hand of thy husband to stroke thee. Come, lady. [*Exeunt fondling.*]

A C T IV.

Scene continues.

Enter Truewit, Clerimont.

Truewit.

WAS there ever poor bridegroom so tormented? or man indeed?

Cler. I have not read of the like in the chronicles of the land.

T 2

Tru.

Tru. The laughter, dancing, noise of the music, and of the whole family, almost distracts him.

Cler. And how soberly Dauphine labours to satisfy him, that it was none of his plot!

Tru. And has almost brought him to the faith, i'the article. Here he comes.

Enter Dauphine.

Where is he now? What's become of him, Dauphine?

Dau. Oh, hold me up a little; I shall go away i'the jest else. He has got on his whole nest of night-caps, and lock'd himself up at the top o'the house, as high as ever he can climb from the noise. I peep'd in at a cranny, and saw him sitting over a cross beam o'the roof, like St. George o' horse-back, at the door of an ale-house; and he will sleep there.

Cler. But where are your collegiates?

Dau. Withdrawn with the bride.

Tru. Oh, they are instructing her in the college grammar.

Dau. Methinks the lady Haughty looks well to-day.

Tru. I begin to suspect you, Dauphine. Speak, art thou in love in earnest?

Dau.

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Dau. Yes, by my troth am I, with all the collegiates.

Cler. Out on thee. With all of them?

Tru. No; I like him well. Men should love wisely, and all the women. Thou wouldst think it strange, if I should make 'em all in love with thee afore night!

Dau. I would say, thou hadst the best Philtre i' the world, and couldst do more than madam Medea.

Tru. If I do not, let me play the mountebank, while I live, for my maintenance.

Dau. So be it, I say.

Enter Otter, Daw, and La-Foole.

Otter. Oh lord, gentlemen, how my knights and I have mis'd you here!

Cler. Why, captain, what service? what service?

Otter. To see me bring up my bull, bear, and horse to fight.

Daw. Yes, faith, the captain says we shall be his dogs to bait 'em.

Daw. A good employment.

Tru. Come on, let's see your course then.

La-F. I am afraid my cousin will be offended if she come.

Otter. Be afraid of nothing. Gentlemen, I have plac'd the drum and the trumpets, and one to give 'em the sign when you are ready. Here's my bull for myself, and my bear for Sir John Daw, and my horse for Sir Amorous. Now set your foot to mine, yours to his, and——

La-F. Pray Heaven, my cousin come not.

Otter. Saint George and Saint Andrew! fear no cousins. Come, sound, sound. *Et rauco streperunt cornua cantu.* [Trumpets.

Tru. Well said, Captain, i'faith; well fought at the bull!

Cler. Well held at the bear!

Tru. Low, low, captain.

Dau. Oh, the horse has kick'd off his dog already.

La-F. I cannot drink it, as I am a knight. It goes against my conscience. My cousin will be angry with it.

Daw. I ha' done mine.

Tru. You fought high and fair, Sir John.

Cler. At the head.

Dau. Like an excellent bear-dog.

Otter. Sir Amorous, you must not equivocate. It must be pull'd down, for all my cousin.

Cler. 'Sfoot, if you take not your drink, they'll think

think you are discontented with something; you'll betray all if you take the least notice.

La-F. Not I, I'll both drink and talk then.

Otter. You must pull the horse on his knees, Sir Amorous; fear no cousins. . *Facta est alea.*

Tru. Oh, now he's in his vein, and bold. The least hint given him of his wife now, will make him rail desperately.

Cler. Speak to him of her.

Tru. Do you, and I'll fetch her to the hearing of it. [*Exit.*

Dau. Captain He-Otter, your She-Otter is coming, your wife.

Otter. Wife! Buz: *Titivilitium.* There's no such thing in nature. I confess, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundress, a house-drudge, that serves me, and goes under that title: But he's an ass that will be so uxorious to tie his affection to one. Wife! the name dulls appetite. A wife is a scurvy *clog-dogdo*, an unlucky thing, a very foresaid bear-whelp; without any good fashion or breeding; *mala bestia.*

[*His wife is brought out to hear him by Truewit.*

Dau. Why did you marry one then, captain?

Otter. I married with six thousand pound, L. I was in love with that. I have not kiss'd my fury these forty weeks.

Cler. The more to blame you, captain.

Tru. Nay, Mrs. Otter, hear him a little first.

Otter. She hath a breath worse than my grand-mother's, *professè.*

Mrs. Otter. Oh, treacherous liar! Kiss me, sweet master Truewit, and prove him a slandering knave.

Tru. I'll rather believe you, lady.

Otter. And she has a peruke, that's like a pound of hemp, made up in shoe-threads,

Mrs. Otter. Oh, viper, mandrake!

Otter. A most vile face! and yet she spends me forty pound a-year in washes for it, mercury, and hogs' bones. All her teeth were made i' the Black-Friers, both her eye-brows i' the Strand, and her hair in Silver-street. Every part o' the town owns a piece of her.

Mrs. Otter. I cannot hold.

Otter. She takes herself afunder still when she goes to bed, into some twenty boxes; and about next day noon is put together again, like a great German clock; and so comes forth, and rings a tedious larum to the whole house, and then is quiet again for an hour, but for her quarters. Ha' you done me right, gentlemen?

Mrs. Otter. No, Sir, I'll do you right with my quarters, with my quarters.

[She falls upon him and beats him.]

Otter. Oh, hold, good princefs.

Tru,

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Tru. Sound, found. [Trumpets,

Cler. A battle, a battle.

Mrs. Otter. You notorious stinkardly bearward, does my breath smell?

Otter. Under correction, dear princess. Look to my bear and my horse, gentlemen.

Mrs. Otter. Do I want teeth, and eye-brows, thou bull-dog?

Tru. Sound, found still. [Trumpets,

Otter. No, I protest, under correction——

Mrs. Otter. Ay, now you are under correction, you protest: But you did not protest before correction, Sir. Thou Judas, to offer to betray thy princess! I'll make thee an example——

Morose, within.

Mor. Villains, murderers, sons of the earth, and traitors, what do you there?

Tru. Oh, now the noises have waked him, we shall have his company.

Enter Morose, with a long sword.

Mor. Rogues, hell-hounds, Stentors, out of my doors, you sons of noise and tumult, begot on an ill May-day, or when the gally-foist is afloat to Westminster! A trumpeter could not be conceiv'd but

but then. Out, out, I say! [*Exit, driving out trumpeters, Mrs. Otter, Daw and La-Foole.*]

Cler. Where's Daw and La-Foole?

Otter. They are both run away, Sir. Good gentlemen, help to pacify my princess, and speak to the great ladies for me. Now must I go lie with the bears this fortnight, and keep out o' the way, till my peace be made, for this scandal she has taken. Did not you see my bull-head, gentlemen?

Cler. Is't not on, captain?

Otter. Oh, here 'tis. An you come over, gentlemen, and ask for Tom Otter, we'll go down to Ratcliff, and have a course i'faith, for all these difasters.

Tru. Away, captain, get off while you are well.

Otter. There is *bona spes* left. [*Exit.*]

Cler. I am glad we are rid of him.

Tru. You had never been, unless we had put his wife upon him. His humour is as tedious at last, as it was ridiculous at first.

Enter Haughty, Mrs. Otter, Mavis, Daw, La-Foole, Centaure, and Epicœne.

Hau. We wonder'd why you shriek'd so, Mrs. Otter.

Mrs. Otter. Oh, Heav'n, madam, he came down with

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with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and look'd so dreadfully. Sure he's beside himself.

Mavis. Why, what made you there, Mrs. Otter?

Mrs. Otter. Alas, Mrs. Mavis, I was chastising my subject, and thought nothing of him.

Daw. Faith, mistress, you must do so too. Learn to chastise. Mistress Otter corrects her husband so, he dares not speak, but under correction.

La-F. And with his hat off to her: 'Twould do you good to see.

Hau. In sadness, 'tis good and mature counsel; practise it, Morose. I'll call you Morose still now, as I call Centaure and Mavis; we four will be all one.

Gen. And you'll come to the college, and live with us?

Hau. Make him give milk and honey.

Mavis. Look how you manage him at first, you shall have him ever after.

Gen. Let him allow you your coach and four horses, your woman, your chamber-maid, your page, your gentleman-usher, your French cook, and four grooms.

Hau. And go with us to Bedlam, to the China-houses, and to the Exchange.

Gen. It will open the gate to your fame.

Hau.

Hau. Here's Centaure has immortaliz'd herself,
with taming of her wild male.

Mavis. Ay, she has done the miracle of the
kingdom.

Re-enter Morose.

Mor. [*entering.*] They have rent my roof, walls,
and all my windows afunder, with their brazen
throats.

Mrs. Otter. Ah! [*Sbrieking.*

Mor. I will have none of these discords in my
house, lady Otter.

Hau. What ails you, Sir?

Mor. And the rest of the train too. Mrs. Mary
Ambree, your examples are dangerous. Begone,
I say!

Epi. Fy, master Morose, that you will use this
violence to a gentlewoman!

Mor. How! [*Dropping his sword.*

Epi. It does not become your gravity or breed-
ing (in court, as you pretend) to have offer'd this
outrage on a waterman, or any more boisterous
creature, much less a lady.

Mor. You can speak then?

Epi. Yes, Sir.

Mor. Speak out, I mean?

Epi. To be sure, Sir: Why, did you think you
had

had married a statue? or a motion only? one of the French puppets, with the eyes turn'd with a wire? or some innocent out of the hospital, that would stand with her hands thus—and a plaife-mouth, and look upon you.

Mor. Oh, immodesty! a manifest woman! a downright virago! What, Cutberd! Where's Cutberd?

Epi. Nay, never quarrel with Cutberd, Sir; it is too late now. I confess it doth bate somewhat of the modesty I had, when I wrote simply maid; but I hope to make it a stock still competent to the estate and dignity of your wife.

Mor. She can talk!

Epi. Yes, indeed, Sir. Did you ever know a woman that could not?

Mor. What, firrah! none of my knaves there? Where is this impostor, Cutberd?

Enter Servant. (Makes signs.)

Epi. Speak to him, fellow; speak to him. I'll have none of this forc'd unnatural dumbness in my house, in a family where I govern.

Mor. Govern! She is my regent already! I have married a Penthesilea, a Semiramis; sold my liberty to a distaff. But I'll be master still—I'll void my house

house of this company, and bar up my doors:
Where are all my eaters, my mouths now?

Enter Servants.

Void my house, and bar up my doors, you varlets!

Epi. He is a varlet that stirs to such an office.
Let 'em stand open! Shall I have a barricado made
against my friends, or be robbed of any pleasure
they can give me by their honourable visitation?

Mor. Oh, Amazonian impudence!

Epi. Nay, in troth, in this, Sir, I speak but
modestly, and am more reasonable than you. Are
not these our nuptials? and is it not meet to give
the day to pleasures, Sir? We'll have jollities of
feasting, musick, dancing, revels and discourse:
We'll have all, Sir, that may make the celebration
of our marriage high and happy. In, in, and be
joyial, ladies! In; I follow you.

[Exit, with ladies, Daw, and La-Foole.]

Manent Morose, Dauphine, and Truewit.

Mor. Oh, my cursed angel, that instructed me
to this fate!

Dau. Why, Sir?

Mor. That I should be seduc'd by so foolish a
devil as a barber will make!

Dau.

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Dau. I would I had been worthy, Sir, to have partaken your counsel; you should never have trusted it to such a minister.

Mor. 'Would I could redeem it with the loss of an eye, nephew!

Dau. I hope there shall be no such need, Sir. Take patience, good uncle. This is but a day, and 'tis well worn too now.

Mor. Oh, 'twill be so for ever, nephew; I foresee it, for ever. Strife and tumult are the dowry that comes with a wife.

Tru. I told you so, Sir, and you would not believe me.

Mor. Alas, do not rub those wounds, master Truewit, to blood again; 'twas my negligence. Add not affliction to affliction. I have perceiv'd the effect of it, too late, in madam Otter.

Re-enter Epicæne, &c.

My executioner here again! oh, misery!

Epi. How do you, Sir?

Mor. Did you ever hear a more unnecessary question? As if she did not see! Why, I do as you see, empress, empress!

Epi. They say you are run mad, Sir.

Mor. Not for love, I assure you, of you, do you see?

Epi.

Epi. Oh, lord, gentlemen! lay hold on him, for Heaven's sake. What shall I do? Who's his physician (can you tell) that knows the state of his body best, that I might send for him? Good Sir, speak: I'll send for one of my doctors else.

Mor. What, to poison me, that I might die intestate, and leave you possess'd of all?

Epi. Lord, how idly he talks, and how his eyes sparkle! He looks green about the temples! Do you see what blue spots he has?

Cler. Ay, it is melancholy.

Epi. Gentlemen, for Heaven's sake, counsel me!

Daw. The disease in Greek is called *Mania*, in Latin, *Insania*.

Mor. Shall I have a lecture read upon me alive?

Epi. But what is this to the cure? we are sure enough of the disease.

Mor. Let me go!

Tru. Why, we'll entreat her to hold her peace, Sir.

Mor. Oh, no; labour not to stop her. She is like a conduit-pipe, that will gush out with more force when she opens again. Oh, oh!

Epi. Sure he would do well enough, if he could sleep.

Mor. No, I should do well enough, if you could sleep.

sleep. Have I no friend, that will make her drunk, or give her a little *laudanum*, or *opium*?

Tru. Why, Sir, she talks ten times worse in her sleep.

Mor. How!

Cler. Do you know that, Sir? never ceases all night.

Tru. And snores like a pig.

Mor. Oh, redeem me, Fate; redeem me, Fate! For how many causes may a man be divorc'd; nephew?

Dau. I know not, truly, Sir.

Tru. Some divine must resolve you in that, Sir, or canon-lawyer.

Mor. I will not rest, I will not think of any other hope or comfort, till I know. So it would rid me of her, I would do penance in a bellfry, with a ring of ten bells; in a cockpit; at the death of a stag; the Tower-Wharf; London-Bridge; Billingsgate, when the noises are at their height and loudest. Nay, I would fit out a play, that were nothing but fights at sea, drums, trumpets, and target. [Exit with Dau.

Cler. Alas, poor man!

Tru. You'll make him mad indeed, ladies, if you pursue this.

Hau. No, we'll let him breathe now, a quarter of an hour or so.

Cler. By my faith, a large truce.

Hau. Is that his keeper, that is gone with him?

Daw. It is his nephew, madam.

La-F. Sir Dauphine Eugene.

Ctn. He looks like a very pitiful knight.

Daw. As can be. This marriage has put him out of all.

La-F. He has not a penny in his purse, madam.

Daw. He is ready to cry all this day.

La-F. A very shark; he set me i' th' nick t'other night at Primero.

Tru. How these swabbers talk!

Cler. Ay, Otter's wine has swell'd their humours above a spring-tide.

Hau. Good Morose, let's go in again!

Epi. I wait on you, madam.

[*Exeunt ladies, Daw, and La-Foole;*

Epicæne following is recalled by Tru.

Tru. Do you hear, lady bride? I pray thee now, as thou art a noble wench, continue this discourse of Dauphine within; but praise him exceedingly; magnify him with all the height of affection thou canst; (I have some purpose in't) and do but beat off

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off these two rooks, Jack Daw and his fellow, with any discontent, and I'll honour thee for ever.

Epi. I warrant you; you shall expect one of 'em presently. [Exit.

Cler. What a cast of castles are these, to hawk after ladies thus!

Tru. Ay, and strike at such an eagle as Dauphine.

Cler. He will be mad, when we tell him. Here he comes.

Enter Dauphine.

Oh, Sir, you are welcome!

Tru. Where's thine uncle?

Dau. Run out o' doors in's night-caps, to talk with a casuist about his divorce. It works admirably.

Tru. Thou wouldst ha' said so, an thou hadst been here! The ladies have laugh'd at thee most comically, since thou went'st, Dauphine.

Cler. And ask'd, if thou wert thine uncle's keeper.

Tru. And the brace of baboons answer'd Yes, and said, thou wert a pitiful poor fellow, and hadst nothing but three suits of apparel, and some few benevolences that the lords gave thee to fool to 'em, and swagger.

Dau. Let me not live, I'll beat 'em; I'll bind 'em

'em both to grand-madam's bed-posts, and have 'em baited with monkies.

Tru. Thou shalt not need; they shall be beaten to thy hand, Dauphine. I have an execution to serve upon 'em; trust my plot.

Dau. Ay, you have many plots! So you had one, to make all the wenches in love with me.

Tru. Why, if I do not yet afore night, as near as 'tis, and that they do not every one invite thee, and be ready to search for thee, take the mortgage of my wit.

Cler. I'll be his witness; thou shalt have it, Dauphine. Thou shalt be his fool for ever, if thou dost not.

Tru. Agreed. Perhaps 'twill be the better estate. But I'll not forfeit my fureties. Thou shalt wreak revenge on these *wits* and *braveries* of the time, Dauphine, and even thereby become the idol, the reigning favourite of all the Collegiates. The device shall be mine, the pleasure thine own, and Daw and La-Foole shall make themselves over to laughter for ever.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T

A C T V.

A gallery in the house of Morose.

Truewit, Dauphine, Clerimont.

Clerimont,

IF you should fail now?

Tru. Oh, Sirs, I'll be answerable for the issue. I cannot fail. I know the height and dimension of their understandings too well: They'll believe themselves to be just such men as we make 'em, neither more nor less: They have nothing, not the use of their senses, but by tradition. 'Slight, man, I will have them as silent as signs, and their posts too, ere I have done with them. Do you observe this gallery, or rather lobby indeed? Here are a couple of studies, at each end one: Here will I act such a tragi-comedy between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, Daw and La-Foole—which of 'em comes out first, will I seize on: (You two shall be the *chorus* behind the arras, and whip out between the acts and speak.) If I do not make

U 3

them

them keep the peace for this remnant of the day, if not of the year—I hear Daw coming: Hide, and do not laugh, for Heaven's sake.

[*Exeunt Dau. and Cler.*]

Enter Sir John Daw.

Daw. Which is the way into the garden, trow?

Tru. Oh, Jack Daw! I am glad I have met with you. In good faith, I must have this matter go no further between you: I must have it taken up.

Daw. What matter, Sir? between whom?

Tru. Come, you disguise it; Sir Amorous and you. If you love me, Jack, you shall make use of your philosophy now, for this once, and deliver me your sword. The bride has entreated me, I will see no blood shed at her bridal.

Daw. As I hope to finish Tacitus, I intend no murder.

Tru. Do you not wait for Sir Amorous?

Daw. Not I, by my knighthood.

Tru. And your scholarship too?

Daw. And my scholarship too.

Tru. Go to, then I return you your sword, and ask you mercy; but put it not up, for you will be assaulted. I understood that you had apprehended it, and walk'd here to brave him; and that you had

had held your life contemptible, in regard of your honour.

Daw. No, no; no such thing, I assure you. He and I parted now, as good friends as could be.

Tru. Trust not you to that visor. I saw him since dinner with another face: I have known many men in my time vex'd with losses, with deaths, and with abuses; but so offended a wight as Sir Amorous, did I never see or read of. For taking away his guests, Sir, to-day, that's the cause; and he declares it behind your back with such threatenings and contempts—He said to Dauphine, you were the arrant'st ass——

Daw. Ay, he may say his pleasure.

Tru. And swears you are so protested a coward, that he knows you will never do him any manly or single right; and therefore he will take his course.

Daw. I'll give him any satisfaction, Sir—but fighting.

Tru. Ay, Sir; but who knows what satisfaction he'll take: Blood he thirsts for, and blood he will have; and whereabouts on you he will have it, who knows, but himself?

Daw. I pray you, Master Truewit, be you a mediator.

Tru. Well, Sir, conceal yourself then in this study till I return. [*He puts him up.*] Nay, you must be content to be lock'd in; for, for mine own reputation, I would not have you seen to receive a publick disgrace, while I have the matter in managing. Gods so, here he comes; keep your breath close, that he do not hear you sigh.—In good faith, Sir Amorous, he is not this way; I pray you be merciful, do not murder him: You are arm'd as if you fought a revenge on all his race. Good Dauphine, get him away from this place. I never knew a man's choler so high, but he would speak to his friends, he would hear reason.—Jack Daw, Jack! asleep?

Daw. [*Coming forth.*] Is he gone, master Truewit?

Tru. Ay; did you hear him?

Daw. Oh, dear, yes.

Tru. What a quick ear fear has?

Daw. But is he so arm'd, as you say?

Tru. Arm'd! did you ever see a fellow set out to take possession?

Daw. Ay, Sir.

Tru. That may give you some light to conceive of him; but 'tis nothing to the principal. He has got somebody's old two-hand sword, to mow you off at the knees: And that sword has spawn'd such a dagger!

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a dagger!—But then he is so hung with pikes, halberds, peitronels, callivers, and musquets, that he looks like a justice of peace's hall: A man of two thousand a-year is not fess'd at so many weapons as he has on. You would think he meant to murder all St. Pulchre's parish. He is sufficiently arm'd to over-run a country.

Daw. Good Lord! what means he, Sir? I pray you, master Truewit, be you a mediator.

Tru. Well, I'll try if he will be pleas'd with a leg or an arm; if not, you must die once.

Daw. I would be loth to lose my right arm, for writing madrigals.

Tru. Why, if he will be satisfied with a thumb, or a little finger, all's one to me. You must think, I'll do my best.

Daw. Good Sir, do. [*Goes into the closet again.*]

Re-enter Dauphine and Clerimont.

Cler. What hast thou done?

Tru. He will let me do nothing, man; he does all afore me; he offers his left arm.

Daup. Take it, by all means.

Tru. How! maim a man for ever, for a jest? What a conscience hast thou?

Daup. 'Tis no loss to him; he has no employment

ment for his arms, but to eat spoon-meat. Beside, as good maim his body, as his reputation.

Tru. He is a scholar, and a wit, and yet he does not think so. But he loses no reputation with us; for we all resolv'd him an ass before. To your places again.

Dau. Come away, Clerimont.

[Retires with Clerimont.]

Enter La-Foole.

Tru. Sir Amorous!

La-F. Master Truewit.

Tru. Whither were you going?

La-F. Down into the court.

Tru. By no means, Sir.

La-F. Why, Sir?

Tru. Enter here, if you love your life.

La-F. Why, why?

Tru. Question till your throat be cut, do: Dally till the enraged soul find you.

La-F. Who's that?

Tru. Dáv it is: Will you in?

La-F. Ay, ay, I'll in: What's the matter?

Tru. Nay, if he had been cool enough to tell us that, there had been some hope to atone you; but he seems so implacably enrag'd——

La-F.

La-F. 'Slight, let him rage: I'll hide myself.

Tru. Do, good Sir; but what have you done to him within, that should provoke him thus? You have broke some jest upon him afore the ladies—

La-F. Not I; never in my life, broke jest upon any man. The bride was praising Sir Dauphine, and he went away in snuff, and I followed him; unless he took offence at me in his drink e're-while, that I would not pledge all the horse-full.

Tru. By my faith, and that may be; you remember well: But he walks the round up and down, thro' every room o' the house, with a towel in his hand, crying, where's La-Foole? who saw La-Foole? And when Dauphine and I demanded the cause, we can force no answer from him, but "Oh, revenge, how sweet art thou! I will strangle him in this towel;" which leads us to conjecture, that the main cause of his fury is, for bringing your meat to-day, with a towel about you, to his discredit.

La-F. Like enough. Why, an he be angry for that, I'll stay here till his anger be blown over.

Tru. A good becoming resolution, Sir; if you can put it on o' the sudden.

La-F. Yes, I can put it on: Or, I'll away into the country presently.

Tru.

Tru. How will you go out of the house, Sir? He knows you are i' the house, and he'll watch you this fe'nnight, but he'll have you: He'll out-wait a serjeant for you.

La-F. Why, then I'll stay here.

Tru. You must think how to victual yourself in time then.

La-F. Why, sweet master Truewit, will you entreat my cousin Otter to send me a cold venison pasty, a bottle or two of wine, and a pallet to lie on?

Tru. Oh, I would not advise you to sleep, by any means.

La-F. Would not you, Sir? why, then I will not.

Tru. Yet there's another fear.

La-F. Is there, Sir? What is't?

Tru. No, he cannot break open this door with his foot, sure.

La-F. I'll fet my back against it, Sir. I have a good back.

Tru. But then if he should batter?

La-F. Batter! If he dare, I'll have an action of battery against him.

Tru. Cast you the worst. He has sent for powder already, and what he will do with it, no man knows: Perhaps blow up the corner o' the house

house where he suspects you are. Think upon some satisfaction, or terms, to offer him.

La-F. Sir, I'll give him any satisfaction: I dare give any terms.

Tru. You'll leave it to me then?

La-F. Ay, Sir: I'll stand to any conditions.

[*Goes into the closet.*]

Tru. How now? what think you, Sirs? [*He calls forth Cler. and Dau.*] Were't not a difficult thing to determine, which of these two fear'd most?

Cler. Yes, but this fears the bravest: The other, a whindling dastard, Jack Daw! But La-Foole, a brave heroick coward! and is afraid in a great look, and a stout accent. I like him rarely.

Tru. Had it not been pity these two should have been conceal'd?

Cler. Shall I go fetch the ladies to the catastrophe?

Tru. Umph! Ay, by my troth. Do, Clerimont, fetch 'em, and discourse to 'em all that's pass'd, and bring 'em into the gallery here.

Dau. This is thy extreme vanity now: Thou think'st thou wert undone, if every jest thou mak'st were not publish'd.

Tru. Thou shalt see how unjust thou art presently. Clerimont, say it was Dauphine's plot. Trust

Trust me not, if the whole drift be not for thy good. [*Exit Clerimont.*] There's a scarf in the next room, put it on, and be ready when I call. Amorous. Away!—John Daw!

Daw peeping out of the closet.

Daw. What good news, Sir?

Tru. Faith, I have followed; and argued with him hard for you. I told him you were a knight, and a scholar, and that you knew fortitude did consist *magis patiendò quàm faciendò, magis ferendò quàm feriendò.*

Daw. It doth so indeed, Sir.

Tru. And that you would suffer, I told him: So at first he demanded, by my troth, in my conceit, too much.

Daw. What was it, Sir?

Tru. Your upper lip, and six o' your fore-teeth.

Daw. 'Twas unreasonable.

Tru. Nay, I told him plainly, you could not spare 'em all. So after long argument (*pro & con*, as you know) I brought him down to your two butter-teeth, and them he would have.

Daw. Oh, did you so? Why, he shall have 'em.

Tru. But he shall not, Sir, by your leave. The conclusion is this, Sir: Because you shall be very good

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good friends hereafter, and this never to be remember'd or upbraided; besides, that he may not boast he has done any such thing to you in his own person, he is to come here in disguise, give you five kicks in private, Sir, take your sword from you, and lock you up in that study during pleasure: Which will be but a little while; we'll get it releas'd presently.

Daw. Five kicks? He shall have six, Sir, to be friends.

Tru. Believe me, you shall not over-shoot yourself, to send him that word by me.

Daw. Deliver it, Sir, he shall have them with all my heart, to be friends.

Tru. Friends? Nay, an he should not be so, and heartily too, upon these terms, he shall have me to enemy while I live. Come, Sir, bear it bravely.

Daw. Oh, Sir, 'tis nothing.

Tru. True. What's six kicks to a man that reads Seneca?

Daw. I have had a hundred, Sir.

Ladies enter here, brought by Clerimont, and listen.

Tru. Sir Amorous! No speaking one to another, or rehearsing old matters.

[Dauphine comes forth and kicks him.]

Daw.

Daw. One, two, three, four, five. I protest, Sir Amorous, you shall have six:

Tru. Nay, I told you, you should not talk. Come, give him six, and he will needs. Your sword. Now return to your safe custody; you shall presently meet afore the ladies, and be the dearest friends one to another. [*Exit Daw.*] Give me the scarf now, thou shalt beat the other bare-fac'd. Stand by.—Sir Amorous!

Re-enter Sir Amorous.

La-F. What's here? a sword?

• *Tru.* I cannot help it, without I should take the quarrel upon myself. Here he has sent you his sword——

La-F. I'll receive none on't.

Tru. And he wills you to fasten it against a wall, and break your head in some few several places against the hilts.

La-F. I will not, tell him roundly. I cannot endure to shed my own blood.

Tru. Will you not?

La-F. No. I'll beat it against a fair flat wall, if that will satisfy him: If not, he shall beat it himself for Amorous.

Tru. Why, this is strange starting off, when a
man

man undertakes for you! I offer'd him another condition; will you stand to that?

La-F. Ay, what is't?

Tru. That you will be beaten in private.

La-F. Yes, I am content, at the blunt.

Tru. Then you must submit yourself to be hood-wink'd in this scarf, and be led to him, where he will take your sword from you, and make you bear a blow over the mouth, and tweaks by the nose out of number.

La-F. I am content. But why must I be blinded?

Tru. That's for your good, Sir; because if he should grow insolent upon this, and publish it hereafter to your disgrace (which-I hope he will not do) you might swear safely, and protest, he never beat you, to your knowledge.

La-F. Oh, I conceive.

Tru. I do not doubt but you'll be perfect good friends upon't, and not dare to utter an ill thought one of another in future.

La-F. Not I, as Heaven help me, of him.

Tru. Nor he of you, Sir. If he should—
Come, Sir. All hid?—Sir John!

[*Dauphine enters to tweak him.*]

La-F. Oh, Sir John, Sir John! Oh, o-o-o-o-o-
Oh—

Tru. Good Sir John, leave tweaking; you'll blow
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his nose off. 'Tis Sir John's pleasure, you should retire into the study. Why, now you are friends. All bitterness between you, I hope, is buried; you shall come forth by and by, Damon and Pythias upon't, and embrace with all the rankness of friendship that can be. [*Exit La-Foole.*] I trust, we shall have 'em tamer i' their language hereafter. Dauphine, I worship thee. Heaven's will! the ladies have surpriz'd us.

Haughty, Centaure, Mavis, Mrs. Otter, Epicæne, and Trusty, come forward, having discovered part of the past scene.

Hau. Centaure, how our judgments were impos'd on by these adulterate knights!

Gen. Nay, madam, Mavis was more deceiv'd than we; 'twas her commendation utter'd 'em in the college.

Mavis. I commended but their wits, madam, and their braveries. I never look'd towards their valours.

Hau. Sir Dauphine is valiant, and a wit too, it seems.

Mavis. And a bravery too.

Hau. Was this his project?

Mrs. Otter. So master Clerimont intimates, madam.

Mavis.

Mavis. He is a very worthy gentleman.

Gen. I could love a man for such a nose!

Mavis. Or such a leg!

Gen. He has an excellent good eye, madam.

Mavis. And a very good look!

Tru. See how they eye thee, man! They are taken, I warrant thee.

Hau. You have unbrad'd our brace of knights here, master Truewit.

Tru. Not I, madam; it was Sir Dauphine's engine.

Hau. I am glad of the fortune (besides the discovery of two such empty caskets) to gain the knowledge of so rich a mine of virtue as Sir Dauphine.

Gen. We would be all glad to stile him of our friendship, and see him at the college.

Mavis. He cannot mix with a sweeter society, I'll prophesy; and I hope he himself will think so.

Dau. I should be rude to imagine otherwise, lady.

Tru. Did not I tell thee, Dauphine? But pursue it now, thou hast 'em.

Hau. Shall we go in again, Morose?

Epi. Yes, madam.

Gen. We'll entreat Sir Dauphine's company.

Tru. Stay, good madam, the interview of the

two friends, Pylades and Orestes: I'll fetch 'em out to you straight.

Hau. Will you, master Truewit?

Daw. Ay; but, noble ladies, do not confess in your countenance, or outward bearing to 'em, any discovery of their follies, that we may see how they will bear up again.

Hau. We will not, Sir Dauphine.

Gen. Mavis. Upon our honours, Sir Dauphine!

Tru. Sir Amorous, Sir Amorous! The ladies are here.

La-F. Are they?

Tru. Yes; but slip out by and by, as their backs are turn'd, and meet Sir John here, as by chance, when I call you. Jack Daw!

Daw. [*Peeping.*] What say you, Sir?

Tru. Whip out behind me suddenly, and no anger i' your looks to your adversary. Now, now!

Enter at opposite doors, Daw and La-Foole.

La-F. Noble Sir John Daw! Where ha' you been?

Daw. To seek you, Sir Amorous.

La-F. Me! I honour you.

Daw. I prevent you, Sir.

Cler. They have forgot their rapiers.

Tru. Oh, they meet in peace, man.

Daw.

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Dau. Where's your sword, Sir John?

Cler. And your's, Sir Amorous?

Dau. Mine! my boy had it forth, to mend the handle, e'en now.

La-F. And my gold handle was broke too, and my boy had it forth.

Dau. Indeed, Sir? How their excuses meet!

Cler. What a consent there is i' the handles!

Tru. Nay, there is so i' the points too, I warrant you.

Mrs. Otter. Oh, me! madam, he comes again, the madman! Away.

[*Exeunt Ladies, Daw, and La-Foole.*

Enter Morose, with two swords.

Mor. What make these naked weapons here, gentlemen?

Tru. Oh, Sir, here hath like to have been murder since you went! A couple of knights fallen out about the bride's favours: We were fain to take away their weapons.

Mor. For her favours?

Tru. Ay, Sir, heretofore, not present. Clerimont, carry them their swords now. They have done all the hurt they will do. [*Exit Clerimont.*

Dau. Have you spoke with a lawyer, Sir?

Mor. Oh, no! there is such a noise i' the court,

that they have frightened me home with more violence than I went! Such speaking and counter-speaking, with their several voices of citations, appellations, allegations, certificates, attachments, interrogatories, references, convictions, and afflictions indeed, among the doctors and proctors, that the noise here is silence to't! a kind of calm midnight!

Tru. Why, Sir, if you would be resolv'd indeed, I can bring you hither a very sufficient lawyer, and a learned divine, that shall enquire into every least scruple for you.

Mor. Can you, master Truewit?

Tru. Yes, and are very sober grave persons, that will dispatch in a chamber with a whisper or two.

Mor. Good Sir, shall I hope this benefit from you, and trust myself into your hands?

Tru. Alas, Sir! your nephew and I have been asham'd, and oft-times mad, since you went, to think how you are abus'd. Go in, good Sir, and lock yourself up till we call you; we'll tell you more anon, Sir.

Mor. Do your pleasure with me, gentlemen; do but divorce me from my wife, and I am bound to you for ever, [Exit,

Dau. What wilt thou do now, Wit?

Tru. Recover me hither Otter and the barber, if you can, by any means, presently.

Dau.

Dau. Why? to what purpose?

Tru. Oh, I'll make the deepest divine and gravest lawyer out o' them two for him.

Dau. Thou canst not, man; these are waking dreams.

Tru. Do not fear me. Clap but a civil gown with the welt o' the one, and a canonical cloak with sleeves o' the other, and give 'em a few terms in their mouths, if there come not forth as able a doctor, and complete a parson, for this turn as may be wish'd, trust not my election: The barber smatters Latin, I remember.

Dau. Yes, and Otter too.

Tru. Well then, if I make 'em not wrangle out this case, to his no-comfort, let me be thought a Jack Daw, or La-Foole, or any thing worse. Go you to your ladies, but first fend for them.

Dau. I will; and you shall have Otter in a trice, and the barber in the snapping of his fingers. [*Exeunt severally.*

Another apartment. Tables, chairs, &c.

La-Foole, Clerimont, Daw.

La-F. Where had you our swords, master Clerimont?

Cler. Why, Dauphine took 'em from the madman.

La-F. And he took 'em from our boys, I warrant you.

Cler. Very like, Sir.

La-F. Thank you, good master Clerimont. Sir John Daw and I are both beholden to you.

Cler. Would I knew how to make you so, gentlemen!

Daw. Sir Amorous and I are your servants, Sir.

Cler. Faith, now we are in private, let's wanton it a little, and talk waggishly. Sir John, I am telling Sir Amorous here that you two govern the ladies where'er you come.

Daw. Not I: Sir Amorous does.

La-F. I protest, Sir John does.

Cler. Well, agree on't together, knights; for between you, you divide the ladies' affections: I see it. You could tell strange stories, my masters, if you would, I know.

Daw. Faith, we have seen somewhat, Sir.

La-F. That we have——Velvet petticoats, and clock'd stockings, or so.

Daw. Ay, and——

Cler. Nay, out with it, Sir John.

Daw. Why—a—do you speak, Sir Amorous.

La-F. No, do you, Sir John Daw.

Daw. P'faith, you shall.

La-F. P'faith, you shall.

Daw.

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Daw. Why, we have been——

La-F. In the great bed at Ware together in our time. On, Sir John.

Cler. Do you hear, Sir John? You shall tell me but one thing truly, as you love me.

Daw. If I can, I will, Sir.

Cler. You lodged in the same house with the bride here?

Daw. Yes, and convers'd with her hourly, Sir.

Cler. And what humour is she of? Is she coming and open, free?

Daw. Oh, exceeding open, Sir. I was her servant, and Sir Amorous was to be.

Cler. Come, you both have had favours from her: I know, and have heard so much.

Daw. Oh, no, Sir.

La-F. You shall excuse us, Sir; we must not wound reputation.

Cler. Tut, she is married now; and therefore speak plainly: Which of you led first? ha?

La-F. Sir John, indeed.

Daw. Oh, it pleases him to say so, Sir; but Sir Amorous knows as well.

Cler. Dost thou, i'faith, Amorous?

La-F. In a manner, Sir.

Cler. Why, I commend you, lads. Little knows don Bridegroom of this; nor shall he, for me.

Daw.

Daw. Hang him, mad ox.

Cler. Speak softly; here comes his nephew. He'll get the ladies from you, Sirs, if you look not to him in time.

La-F. Why, if he do, we'll fetch 'em home again, I warrant you. [*Exeunt Daw and La-Foole.*]

Enter Dauphine.

Cler. Where's Truewit, Dauphine? We want him much. His knights are wound up as high and insolent as ever they were.

Dau. You jest.

Cler. No drunkards, either with wine or vanity, ever confess'd such stories of themselves. I would not give a fly's leg in balance against all the womens' reputations here, if they could be but thought to speak truth: And, for the bride, they have made their affidavit against her directly.

Dau. Indeed!

Cler. Yes; and tell times, and circumstances.

Dau. Not both of 'em?

Cler. Yes, faith; they would have fet it down under their hands.

Dau. Why, they will be our sport, I see, still, whether we will or no.

Enter Truewit, with Otter and Cutberd disguised.

Tru. Oh, are you here? Come, Dauphine; go
call

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call your uncle presently : I have fitted my divine and my canonist, dy'd their beards and all. Come, master doctor, and master parson, look to your parts now, and discharge 'em bravely ; you are well set forth, perform it as well. If you chance to be out, do not confess it with standing still, or humming, or gaping one at another ; but go on, and talk aloud, and eagerly ; use vehement action, and only remember your terms, and you are safe. Here he comes : Set your faces, and look superciliously, while I present you.

Enter Morose and Dauphine.

Mor. Are these the two learned men ?

Tru. Yes, Sir ; please you salute 'em !

Mor. Salute 'em ? I had rather do any thing, than wear out time so unfruitfully, Sir.

Tru. We'll go to the matter then. [*Sit at the table.*] Gentlemen, master doctor, and master parson, I have acquainted you sufficiently with the business for which you are come hither ; and you are not now to inform yourselves in the state of the question, I know. This is the gentleman who expects your resolution ; and therefore, when you please, begin.

Otter. Please you, master doctor.

Cut. Please you, good master parson.

Otter. I would hear the canon-law speak first.

Cat.

Cut. It must give place to positive divinity, Sir.

Mor. Nay, good gentlemen, do not throw me into circumstances. Let your comforts arrive quickly at me, those that are. Be swift in affording me my peace, if so I shall hope any. For the cause of noise, am I now a suitor to you. You do not know in what a misery I have been exercis'd this day, what a torrent of evil! My very house turns round with the tumult! I dwell in a wind-mill! The perpetual motion is here.

Tru. Well, good master doctor, will you break the ice? Master parson will wade after.

Cut. Sir, tho' unworthy, and the weaker, I will presume.

Otter. 'Tis no presumption, *demine* doctor.

Mor. Yet again!

Cut. Your question is, for how many causes a man may have *divortium legitimum*, a lawful divorce. First, you must understand the nature of the word divorce, *a divertendo*.

Mor. No excursions upon words, good doctor; to the question briefly.

Cut. I answer then, the canon-law affords divorce but in few cases; and the principal is in the common case, the adulterous case: But there are *duodecim impedimenta*, twelve impediments (as we call 'em) all which do not *dirimere contractum*, but
irritum

irritum reddere matrimonium, as we say in the canon-law; not take away the bond, but cause a nullity therein.

Mor. I understood you before: Good Sir, avoid your impertinency of translation.

Otter. He cannot open this too much, Sir, by your favour.

Mor. Yet more!

Tru. Oh, you must give the learned men leave, Sir. To your impediments, master doctor.

Cut. The first is *impedimentum erroris*.

Otter. Of which there are several *species*.

Cut. Ay, as *error personæ*.

Otter. If thou contract thyself to one person, thinking her another.

Cut. Then *error fortunæ*.

Otter. If she be a beggar, and you thought her rich.

Cut. Then *error qualitatis*.

Otter. If she prove stubborn or head-strong, that you thought obedient.

Mor. How? Is that, Sir, a lawful impediment? One at once, I pray you, gentlemen.

Otter. Ay, *ante copulam*, but not *post copulam*, Sir.

Tru. Alas, Sir, what a hope are we fall'n from!

Cut. The next is *conditio*: The third is *votum*:
The

The fourth is *cognatio*: if the persons be of kind within the degrees.

Otter. Ay, do you know what the degrees are, Sir?

Mor. No, nor I care not, Sir; they offer me no comfort in the question, I am sure.

Cut. But there is a branch of this impediment may, which is *cognatio spiritualis*: If you were her god-father, Sir, then the marriage is incestuous.

Mor. Oh, me! To end the controversy, I never was a god-father, I never was a god-father in my life, Sir. Pass to the next.

Cut. The fifth is *crimen adulterii*; the known case. The sixth *cultus disparitas*, difference of religion: Have you ever examin'd her, what religion she is of.

Mor. No, I would rather she were of none, than be put to the trouble of it.

Cut. The seventh is, *viz.* if it were upon compulsion or force.

Mor. Oh, no, it was too voluntary, mine, too voluntary.

Cut. The eighth is, *ordo*; if ever she have taken holy orders.

Otter. That's superstitious, absurd, absurd, and merely apostatical.

Cut. You shall pardon me, master parson; I can prove that——

Otter.

Otter. You can prove a will, master doctor; you can prove nothing else. Does not your own canon say, *Hæc socianda vetant connubia, facta retractant.*

Cut. I grant you; but how do they *retractare*, master parson?

Mor. Oh, this was it I fear'd. Peace, good echoes! Oh, mine ears, mine ears!

Tru. Nay, good Sir, attend the learned men. They have near done. Proceed to the next, Sirs.

Cut. The ninth is, *ligamen.*

Otter. If you were bound to any other before,

Mor. No, no, I thrust myself too soon into these others.

Cut. The tenth is, *publica honestas.*

Otter. Ay, and is but *leve impedimentum.*

Cut. The eleventh is, *affinitas ex fornicatione.*

Otter. Which is no less *vera affinitas*, than the other, master doctor.

Cut. True, *quæ oritur ex legitimo matrimonio.*

Otter. You say right, venerable doctor: And, *nâscitur ex eo*—

Cut. I conceive you, master parson: *Ita æque est verus pater*—

Otter. *Et vere filius qui sic generatur.*

Mor. What's all this to me?

Cut. The twelfth and last is, *si forte*—

Enter

Enter Epicæne, Haughty, Centaure, Mavis, Mrs. Otter, Daw, La-Foole.

Epi. I will not endure it any longer. Ladies, I beseech you help me. This is such a wrong as never was offer'd to poor bride before: Upon her marriage-day, to have her husband conspire against her, and a couple of mercenary companions to be brought in for form's sake, to persuade a separation! If you had blood or virtue in you, gentlemen, you would not suffer such earwigs about a husband, or scorpions to creep between man and wife.

Mor. Oh, the variety and the changes of my torment!

Hau. Let 'em be cudgell'd out of doors by our grooms.

Cen. I'll lend you my footman.

Mavis. We'll have our men blanket them i' the hall.

Daw. Content, i'faith.

Tru. Stay, ladies and gentlemen! you'll hear before you proceed?

Mavis. I'll have the bridegroom blanketed too.

Cen. Begin with him first.

Hau. Yes, by my troth.

Mor. Oh, mankind generation!

Daw.

Dau. Ladies, for my sake forbear.

Hau. Yes, for Sir Dauphine's sake.

Gen. He shall command us.

Dau. Come, I see now plain confederacy to abuse a gentleman. You study his affliction. Sir, will it please you hear me?

Mor. Oh, do not talk to me; take not from me the pleasure of dying in silence, nephew.

Dau. Sir, I must speak to you. If I free you of this unhappy match absolutely, and instantly, after all this trouble, and almost in your despair, now—

Mor. (It cannot be.)

Dau. Sir, that you be never troubled with a murmur of it more, shall I have your favour perfect to me, and love hereafter?

Mor. That, and any thing beside. Make thine own conditions.

Epi. Will Sir Dauphine be mine enemy too?

Dau. You know I have been long a suitor to you, uncle, that out of your estate, which is fifteen hundred a-year, you would allow me but five hundred during life, and assure the rest upon me after; to which I have often, by myself and my friends, tender'd you a writing to sign, which you would never consent or incline to. If you please but to effect it now—

Mor. Thou shalt have it, nephew: I will do it, and more.

Dau. If I quit you not presently, and for ever of this trouble, you shall have power instantly afore all these, to revoke your act, and I will become whose slave you will give me to, for ever.

Mor. Where is the writing? I will seal to it, that, or to a blank, and write thine own conditions.

Epi. Oh, me! most unfortunate wretched gentlewoman!

Hau. Will Sir Dauphine do this?

Epi. Good Sir, have some compassion on me.

Mor. Oh, my nephew knows you belike; away, crocodile!

Gen. He does it not sure without good ground.

Dau. Here, Sir.

Mor. Come, nephew, give me the pen; I will subscribe to any thing, and seal to what thou wilt for my deliverance. Thou art my restorer. Here; I deliver it thee as my deed. If there be a word in it lacking, or writ with false orthography, I protest before—I will not take the advantage.

Dau. Then here is your release, Sir; [*Epicæne throws off female apparel, and appears in boy's cloaths.*] you have married a boy.

Mor. A boy!

Dau. Yes; mistress *Epicæne*, a gentleman's son, that

that I have brought up this half-year, at my great charges, and for this composition, which I have now made with you. What say you, master doctor? This is *justum impedimentum*, I hope; *error personarum*.

Otter. Yes, Sir, *in primo gradu*.

Cut. *In primo gradu*.

Daw. I thank you, good doctor Cutberd, and parson Otter. [*They throw off their disguises.*] You are beholden to 'em, Sir, that have taken this pains for you; and my friend, master Truewit, who enabled 'em for the business. Now you may rest, be as private as you will, Sir. Cutberd, I'll make your lease good. Thank me not, but with your leg, Cutberd. And, Tom Otter, your princess shall be reconcil'd to you. How now, gentlemen! do you look at me?

Tru. Well, Dauphine, you have lurch'd your friends of the better half of the garland, by concealing this part of the plot: But much good do it thee! thou deserv'st it, lad: And, Clerimont, for thy unexpected bringing these two to confession, wear my part of it freely.

Epi. Now, Sir Daw, and Sir La-Foole, you see the gentlewoman that has done you the favours!

Tru. We are all thankful to you, and so should
the

the woman-kind here; but that we have stuck it upon you to-day, in your own imagin'd persons, and so lately, this Amazon, the champion of the sex, should beat you now thriftily, for the common slanders which ladies receive from such cuckows as you are. You are they, that when no merit or fortune can make you hope to possess their persons, make their fame suffer. Away, you common moths of these, and all ladies' honours! Go, travel to make legs and faces, and come home with some new matter to be laugh'd at. Madams, you are mute, upon this new metamorphosis! But here stands she that has vindicated your fames. Take heed of such insects hereafter. And let it not trouble you, if you have discover'd any mysteries to this young gentleman: We'll all undertake for his secrecy, that can speak so well of his silence.

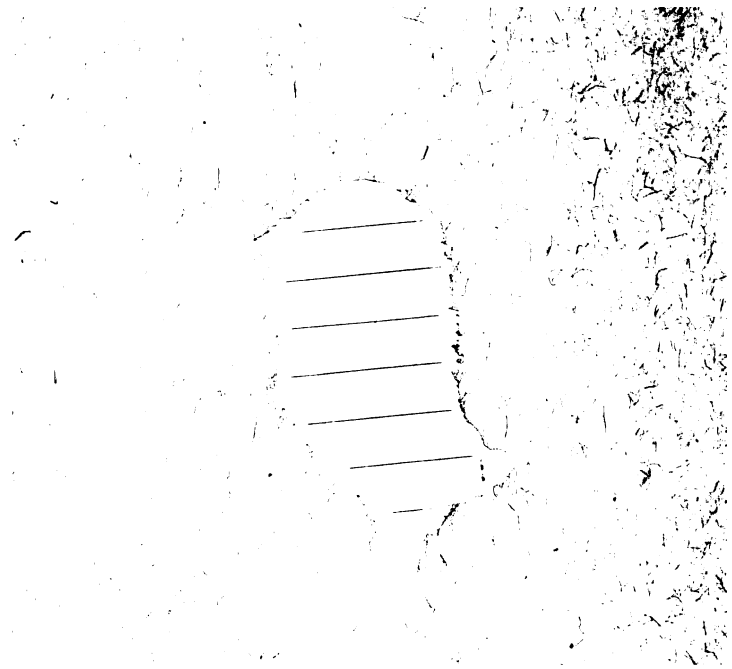
Mor. Spectators, if you like this Comedy, rise chearfully, and clap your hands. Those sounds will please me; nay, cure me of my aversion to noise.

END of the THIRD VOLUME.

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JL







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